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ABSTRACT

Denmark has a long tradition of adult learning with roots that go back to the 19th century folk high school movement. Since the late 1950s, an independent adult vocational education and training (VET) system has developed. In the last decades, attempts have been made to link adult VET systems with adult liberal education. More recently, development of the adult education and training (AET) system is characterized by reforms changing the focus, roles, and subsidy schemes. The Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training system has three principal aims: adult liberal education, general adult education, and VET. Within the field of adult learning, cooperation and competition is found--between the same providers, between public and private providers, and between private providers. Overlapping supply does not necessarily pose a problem; in a demand-driven system, it is a precondition for competition between providers. Both the vertical range and horizontal level of adult learning show great diversity. Adult education is an investment expected to produce many positive economic and job-related effects. Issues, problems, and good practice facing AET are motivation of adult learners, identification of adults' needs, enterprises' use of continuing education, and role of the social partners. Key issues of AET reform are balance between public and private financing, institutional cooperation, and improved program quality. (Contains 70 references.) (YLB)

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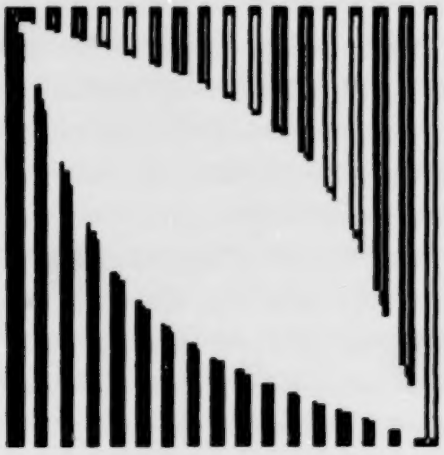
THEMATIC REVIEW ON ADULT LEARNING



DENMARK

BACKGROUND REPORT

November 2000
Finalised in March 2001

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Preface

This report has been prepared by Danish Technological Institute in close co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.

There is a great deal of abbreviations in the text. These abbreviations are explained the first time they are used, but, still, we have found it necessary to prepare a list of abbreviations, which can be found on page 81.

Furthermore, Appendix 1 contains an overview of the Danish system of councils on adult education.

In Appendix 2, there is a table covering the total Danish Education and Continuing Vocational Training system.

Appendix 3 contains a short description of the Danish qualifying adult education and training.

Introduction

Education is the key to the Scandinavian welfare model. A high educational frequency is believed to contribute to the productivity of the workforce, to low structural unemployment, and to a relatively equal distribution of income. The democratic process and options for personal development of individuals are believed to be strengthened through equal access to basic education as well as to additional and further education.

Most of these targets are addressed by the Danish general education system: the basic level of education, the youth education, and the further education activities. This is where young people are prepared and educated for active participation on the labour market and for social life in general.

However, the education that takes place in this general education system, before the individual enters the labour market, proves increasingly to be insufficient in itself. The development from an industrial society towards a knowledge-based society implies that knowledge is an increasingly important precondition for the individual to cope with a world in a situation of permanent change. The ongoing technological development and the focus on less hierarchical forms of organisation, with increasing emphasis on responsibility and initiative of the individual, are other development patterns, which demand continuous improvements of the individual throughout the full period of active labour market participation.

The development of the business conditions and enterprise structure has had the effect that general and personal qualifications, such as skills within areas of communication, language, creativity, teamwork, problem solving, and knowledge of new technologies are increasingly important for the individual to maintain permanent employment. Thus, the broad qualifications of the individual are increasingly playing a role in relation to the process of production in contrast to the previous situation when work organisation often confined the role of the individual to a few specific work functions. While the focus of education was earlier on specific technical and general competencies, development of personal qualifications are now increasingly gaining ground as focal point for education and training.

Especially, increasing demands for broad qualifications are set up in companies, which have set through technological improvements as well as corresponding organisational changes. And remarkably, such enterprises, which are considered to be the ones in the forefront of technological development, are concluding that it is the organisational changes rather than the technological ones, which are putting up demands for additional competencies and qualifications.

However, the labour market situation has changed radically in recent years. Unemployment has on the whole been reduced to what is called the 'structural level'. And for the first time in 30 years Denmark will not have a demographically sustained growth of the labour force. In addition to the political target of bringing down public debt before the upcoming major increase of the public obligations for care of senior citizens, this aggravates the demand for very careful priority setting of public expenditures, also within the area of Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training.

Structural changes in enterprises and in society lead to a demand for, and to a focus on, the need for lifelong learning, allowing for the individual to develop new qualifications throughout the individual's whole lifetime – non-formally in relation to the workplace, and formally through the Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training system. In such sense, the training activities are an advantage to both the individual participant and his or her employer. In addition, they contribute to the fulfilling of a number of overall targets set up for the development of the Danish society. As a consequence, today public interventions play a major role in funding for and production of the Danish adult education and training, as well as for the identification of demands and needs for new adult education and training. Such public interventions both focus on strict technical demands for qualifications of the workforce on the labour market and on development of 'soft' qualifications in the Danish population, to fulfil the needs for flexible labour on the market place as well as to support and strengthen the development of autonomy and critical participation of the population at all levels of the development of the Danish society.

Thus, the general ability of Denmark to be internationally competitive will increasingly depend on the overall educational level of the Danish population.

Equality, also in respect of education and qualifications, forms an important basis for the Scandinavian welfare model and is an important part of the Danish overall policy agenda. In this perspective it is a concern that the part of the Danish population that has received the highest levels of general education seems also to be the one to be most aware of the need for lifelong learning. In addition these individuals are often the key staff of enterprises and will therefore receive specific attention and support for further education and training. In this way the challenge for a more equally educated society has increased, demanding for a concerted political effort to counteract this development. If such initiatives are not taken, the actual development may even increase the differences in education and qualifications throughout society.

This report is aiming at exploring and describing the rationale of the actual Danish adult education and training system, and at describing actual development trends of such adult learning. For this purpose actual policy initiatives are described in detail as well as trends in pedagogical approach to fulfil both the needs of enterprises, individuals, and society as such.

1. Context and background

1.1 Economic, labour, and social context and trends

The Danish economy has shown a highly robust performance of growth and employment during the 1990s. The period has been characterised by a boom, and at the same time some of the major factors behind this development have been the implemented structural reform of labour market, tax reforms, fiscal consolidation, and a number of fiscal adjustments.

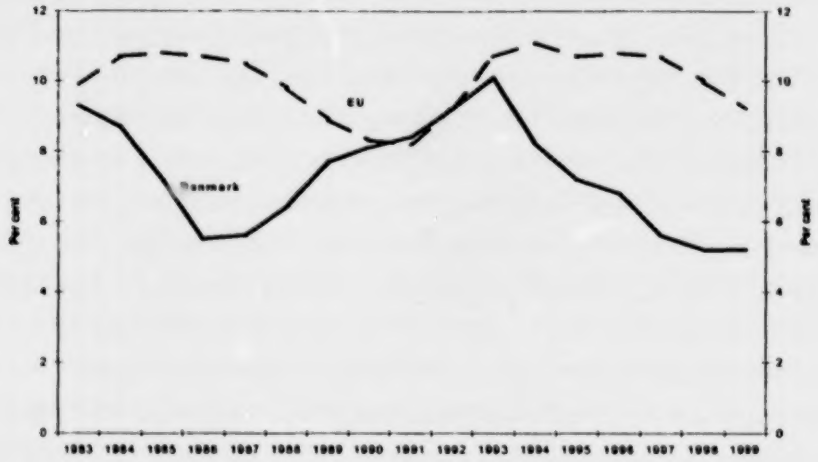
The labour market reform process has combined increasing employability and tighter job search requirements, however, without reducing benefit levels, which could have led to increasing income inequality. Increased effectiveness of the active labour market policy has been among the most important policy changes, and the recurrent adjustments of the Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training activities have supported and strengthened this active labour market policy.

Recent years have seen a positive economic development in Denmark as well as in the countries Denmark is co-operating closely with regarding the economy. Unemployment in Denmark has dropped to a level not experienced since the early 1980s, and is unlikely to drop much further. Existing unemployment is mostly short-term, of which most is associated with unavoidable frictions and special coverage in the benefit system such as periods of vacation. The tighter labour market conditions present both a challenge and an opportunity to include more people from the margins of the labour market, to raise labour force participation, and to improve the skills of the labour force. A number of important steps have been taken to meet this requirement, which is important for developments in the medium and long run, in terms of increasing social inclusion and contributing to robust government finances.

First of all, the new Government in 1993 (lead by the Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party) implemented labour market reforms and alterations in the supplementary adult education and training.

The initiatives were based on the developments on the labour market. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the labour market - as well as the Danish economy - was marked by regression and unemployment. Unemployment had been growing steadily since the 1970s, cf. Figure 1.1, and many factors indicated structural problems on the labour market.

Figure 1.1: The unemployment rate in relation to the average of the EU (1983 – 1999)



Source: OECD, Employment Outlook, 2000.

The structural problems reflected that the mechanisms such as wage formation, the educational system, the activation system, legal framework for unemployment benefits and availability - ensuring coherence between supply and demand on the labour market - were not working in an entirely satisfactory manner.

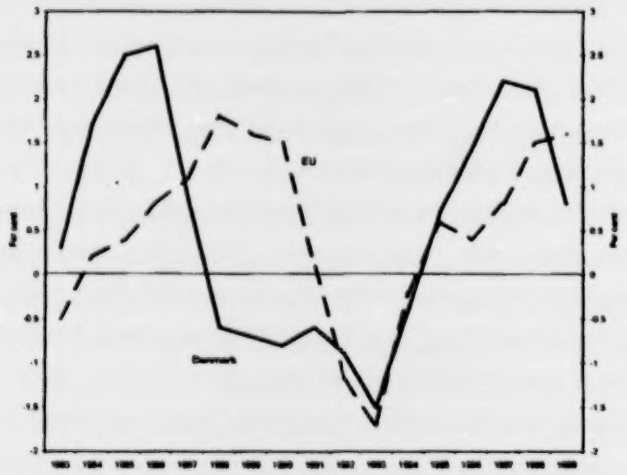
In 1994, the Government accordingly implemented a number of initiatives - including labour market policy reforms and expansions of the public supplementary training system[1] - in order to reduce unemployment and to ensure a more efficient labour market.

The aim of such initiatives was specifically to create workplaces for unemployed, and one principal means was substantial expansion of adult education and training (targeting 60,000 new training positions) and accordingly achieving upgraded qualifications of the workforce, and creating room for unemployed to enter the active labour market as replacements for the workers participating in the adult learning activities.

As a consequence of the implemented initiatives and positive market trends, the labour market situation has improved considerably throughout the later years of the 1990s. Employment has increased, unemployment has dropped (cf. Figure 1.2), and the population's training level has grown (cf. Figure 1.3).

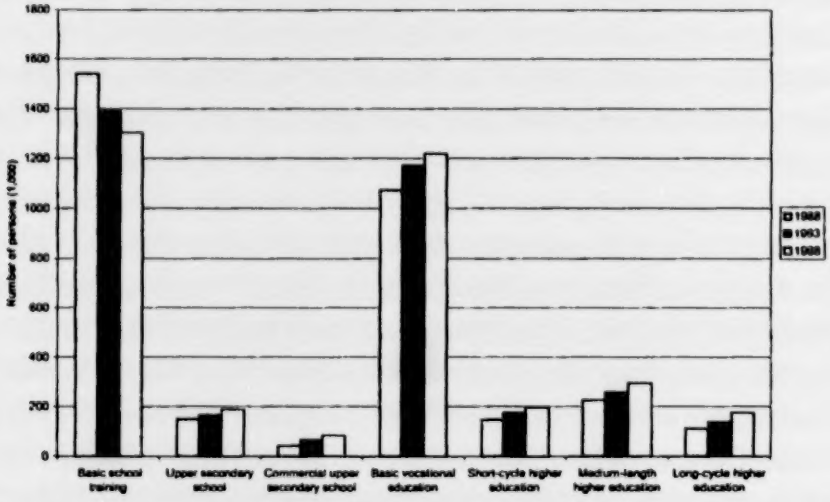
[1] The reforms have been adjusted concurrently with the favourable development on the labour market, and new initiatives have just been implemented (cf. Section 1.5).

Figure 1.2: Development in employment rate, Denmark and EU average (1983 - 1999)



Source: OECD economic outlook, June 2000.

Figure 1.3: Population broken down by highest completed level of education



Source: Danmarks Statistik (Statistics Denmark), 1999.

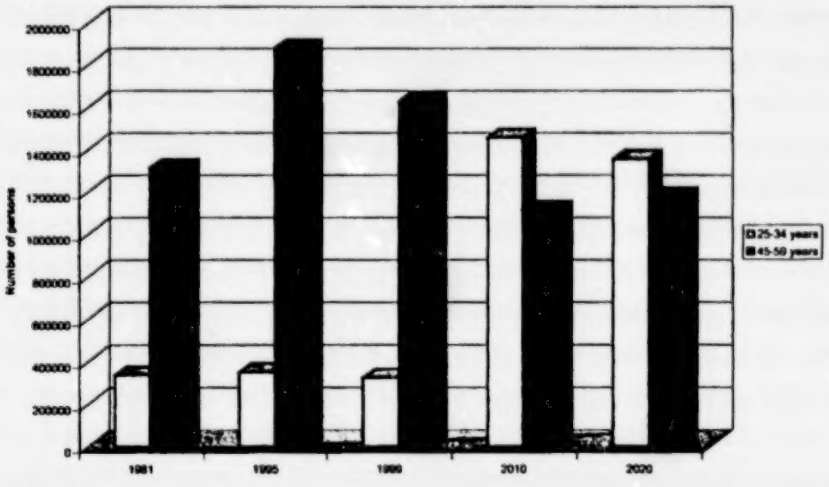
Developments on the labour market and expectations as to the future development have implied that the challenges for the Danish labour market and training policies have changed in character since the beginning of the early 1990s.

The low unemployment figures implied a change in the demand for supplementary training. It is accordingly no longer a direct principle that as many as possible - employed and unemployed - should participate in supplementary training during

working hours. On the contrary, the target is that as many as possible should be available for the labour market in order to neutralise possible bottlenecks. Nevertheless, upgrading and training targeting the needs of the labour market are still quite urgent - particularly for the share of the labour force lacking any training other than basic school education.

Other framework conditions are also changing, especially the development in the labour force. For the first time in 30 years, a demographic increase in the labour force is not expected, cf. Figure 1.4. The next 20 - 30 years will also witness an increase in the number of young and old people, in relation to the age group of 25 - 59 years. The long-term challenge is accordingly to ensure that as many as possible of the 25 - 64 year-olds remain employed and are as productive in their job as possible. As indicated in Figure 1.4, this scenario will be particularly prevalent in the early years of the new millennium.

Figure 1.4: Developments in the labour force 1981-2020



The Danish participation rate is furthermore high when compared with other countries (just above the participation rate in the US and much higher than the European average). This further intensifies the pressure on the labour market and increases the need for alternative solutions, in order to ensure that the labour market is supplied with sufficient labour force resources in the future with a view to avoiding bottlenecks and overheating of the labour market.

The composition of the labour force will also be subject to change throughout the coming years. Workers possessing only a low formal level of education will constitute a considerable but decreasing share of the workforce. In 1999, 1.1 million adult Danes – of a labour force totalling 2.9 million people - only possessed the basic school education. By 2020, this number is expected to decrease to 0.8 million.

Despite the increase in the labour force's educational level, there will still be a considerable number of adults with no formal vocational education beyond the basic school education. The supply of new skills is furthermore reduced because of the appearance on the labour market of the smaller birth cohorts.

Enterprises' demand for labour is also likely to undergo changes in the future. Concurrently with the adjustment to the knowledge society, it may be expected that enterprises will, to an increasing degree, demand labour with specific qualifications - and that the demand will increasingly target skilled rather than unskilled labour. Another tendency indicates that enterprises increasingly prefer to employ skilled labour - even though performance of the jobs does not presuppose vocational skills.

The result of these mechanisms is that persons lacking training beyond basic school education and persons with only a low formal level of education will sustain difficulties in retaining their labour market position in the future. An upgrading of these groups of workers is, accordingly, of particular importance. At the same time, there will be a continued need for an upgrading of the qualifications of the skilled workers.

The labour market situation has thus changed considerably throughout the 1990s and has made new demands on the framing of labour market and educational policies.

In order to meet the illustrated developments in the labour market, on 31st May 2000, the Parliament adopted the Adult Education Reform. The reform generally aims to prioritise the efforts directed at workers with a low level of education, and on the basis of supplementary training to improve their opportunities on the labour market.

The need for upgrading of present and future employees has also prompted several initiatives to promote that refugees and immigrants are supplied with the necessary competencies to enter the labour market. It is still possible to enlarge the labour force by these initiatives - an issue also subject to ongoing political discussion.

The pressed situation on the labour market of today has also intensified attention on upgrading of weaker groups (early retirement pensioners, *etc.*) and helping them enter the labour market. Several initiatives have accordingly been implemented, for instance by improving opportunities for financial support and employment of weaker groups (for example jobs with flexible hours for adults who do not have full working capacity), and strengthening of these initiatives is being considered continually.

Measures have also been taken to increase the participation rates of the elderly, *e.g.* the phasing out of the optional retirement scheme, and make the transition between work and retirement more flexible so that elderly people - in the retirement age group – can choose to work fewer hours (part-time retirement).

As already mentioned a number of initiatives within supplementary training have been implemented, and training and labour market policies have been adjusted to prepare Denmark for the future development.

1.2 Definition of adult learning

In Denmark, the current general discussion on learning is of great importance to the debate on adult learning. The concept of learning marks a change of perspective away from the previous focus on motivation and teaching as ways of learning. Now a more dynamic approach is being taken to participants' qualifications, the process of learning, and the significance of the participants' own choice and perhaps even critical approach to the subject. This change in perspective is the result of comprehensive research during recent decades, thus indicating a shift of methods used in the educational systems. What is common now in the Danish adult education and training system is participant-centred teaching, project work, and problem orientation. Moreover, it is greatly emphasised to establish a close connection between the education and the working lives of adults.

First, some words on the concept of learning in the Danish context. The concept of learning is a wide-ranging concept. It can cover both formal and non-formal (or informal) learning processes. This detailed understanding of learning is a result of critical thinking regarding education. The critical thinking on education stems partly from the discussion in the 1970s of the 'hidden curriculum', which proved that the material and organisational structure of institutions and teaching has the function of socialising the participants according to certain norms. This socialisation takes place without the participants being conscious of it - and has formed the basis of learning as consisting of both formal and non-formal (or informal) processes. Another important source of inspiration for Danish research has been German critical researchers, who have shed light on the functions of schooling, polarisation and alienation, and last – but not least - the Danish understanding of experimental pedagogy. These discussions have led to the recognition that it is far from all teaching that results in learning, and that much learning takes place outside formalised education and training contexts.

This critical approach to learning and training has had the effect that people in the adult education and training system have also become fully aware of the interaction between the primary goals and interests in connection with education and training, and the multitude of parallel processes. The fact that the aim of the Danish education and training system is to serve the interests of both enterprises ***and*** adults as such represent a well-known conflict, since the interests of enterprises may not always fit with the interests of adults wanting to be qualified.

Learning processes are always the result of an interaction between the subject, the training environment, and the experiences brought into the process by the individual participant. Learning is the process through which a person acquires qualifications leading to lasting change in behaviour, for instance technical or other job-related qualifications, general qualifications, or personal qualifications. Therefore, current learning theories include a psychological or psychodynamic element as a supplement to concepts and theories from the pedagogical area.

Research on Adult Learning in Denmark

In recent years, substantial research has focussed on adult learning (Ahrenkiel *et al.*, 1998; Ahrenkiel, Illeris, Nielsen and Simonsen, 1999; Hansen and Netterstrøm, 1995). The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour have initiated the research in co-operation with a number of research institutions. The aim has been to focus on ways to create a good and constructive framework for the learning process of adults who are to participate in education and training. Through financial support for such research initiatives the two ministries have contributed to the development of the field of adult education and training, and, from an overall point of view, created the framework of the Government's strategy concerning the development of Denmark as a society where the resources and competencies of adults are regarded as the basis for welfare.

A recent example of a research project within the field of adult education and training is 'The project on general qualifications' (*Almenkvalificeringsprojektet*). It was carried out by the Adult Education Research Group of Roskilde University and it has had adult vocational training courses as its central research field. The project has developed the concepts of general qualifications and process-independent qualifications. The aim of the project has been to find out how education and training situations can support the development of these types of qualifications. One of the primary issues of the research has been direct intervention and development work among teachers in the system of Adult Vocational Training. Therefore, within the Adult Vocational Training system a strong focus on adults' experiences from their working lives is a source of inspiration, and part of the teaching form is based on project work in groups and problem orientation.

The results of the project have had further far-reaching repercussions and have influenced discussions in a large number of other adult education and training sectors. Thus, for many years, Danish Technological Institute has carried out development projects focussing on the development of vocational education and training, among other ways through a focus on the development of the process-independent qualifications in the field between institutional learning and learning on the job. There are different examples where the principle of the alternating education system (internships alternating with theoretical school periods) – a characteristic feature of a number of the Danish vocational levels of education - has been further developed.

'The project on didactics regarding adults' (*Voksendidaktik-projektet*) is another project, which is focusing on adult learning. The project is a continuation of 'The project on general qualifications' (*Almenkvalificeringsprojektet*). It combines a perspective used in relation to ten existing levels of adult education taught at day folk high schools, General Adult Education Centres, and Adult Vocational Training Centres with a basic research perspective of what and under what conditions adults learn. Here, work is centred on further development and planning of different forms of adult education and training in the light of motivation for learning and learning processes of adults.

A significant outcome of these research initiatives is that the idea that learning has to do with the individual's motivation and life situation has been put into focus. This comprehensive view of learning and qualifications has changed the approach of the Danish adult education and continuing training system in the direction of a wider view of the individual participant's experiences and situation in life. Consequently, in recent

years the project work form has received a dominant role in adult education and training in Denmark.

The project work form, which differs from other learning forms by emphasising project work in groups and the required multi-disciplinary abilities, develops the personal qualifications. The participants learn to understand the contents of the training by understanding, obtaining knowledge about, and solving problems, which the participants find relevant. Development projects show that the adult participants in education and training start out being very insecure at the prospect of participating in learning situations without a teacher to control the learning process. But after the participants have tried the project work form, they are very satisfied with the working method and they prefer this method to the ordinary training situation where it is primarily a teacher who communicates a subject.

Recent years have seen a trend towards a strong focus on both the formal and the non-formal learning taking place on the job. This is reflected, *e.g.*, in the broad range of adult education and training programmes based on the fact that adults are able to complete vocational education and training in considerably shorter programmes than the young students (although conferring identical qualifications), since their job experiences within the area form the basis for credit transfer.

This means that research on learning has been developed in a close interaction between the existing research, for example the teacher education developed within the Adult Vocational Training system, and the number of pilot and development projects, which have been carried through within various adult education and continuing vocational training programmes. It has been a joint process where a further development has taken place, and a more detailed understanding of the concept of learning in Denmark has been created, through a mutual development between educational institutions, research institutions, ministries, and committees.

Age criteria

In the proposed appendices for statistical information in relation to this report, a general age limit of 25 is set as the lower limit for adult education, so as to have one uniform criterion across nations. Such a strict age limit as criterion for a definition of 'adult' does not fit with the Danish systems of adult learning. Denmark does not have a general age limit of 25, the limits varying considerably. Some age limits (18 years) concern education at the basic level and reflect not only the age when the students come of age and are regarded as adults in that respect, but also the age beyond which the local authorities are no longer obliged, nor indeed entitled, to offer youth school activities (supplement to the basic school). Other age limits (25 years) concern post-compulsory vocational education and are primarily set up to avoid financial speculations to dominate the choice of education as well as the recruitment efforts regarding students.

As a matter of fact, in Denmark the terms 'adult education' and 'adult training' are understood as being in contrast to the initial (or youth) education, which is taking place in primary and lower secondary schools as part of the basic education system, and even to ordinary post-secondary education as the first choice after youth education. Adults can also enter the basic education system (except of course basic school for children), but in the entire education and training system the aim is to give the adult education and training participants specially planned education and training, since the adults – in

contrast to the young – have experiences from life in general and job experiences, and need to be able to combine further education and training with their work.

1.3 Historical development of adult learning

The rise of adult education in Denmark - the folk high school movement from the mid-1800s

In many countries the concept of supplementary education is associated with training, additional to the basic school education that all children receive. The object of basic education is to build up children's skills and knowledge while providing them with social and societal virtues, and the very purpose of supplementary education is to complement with workplace-oriented, specific technical and organisational knowledge, and to pass on the same qualities to the non-educated adults in the population. To popular movements, however, supplementary training was interpreted as criticism of the established system and the authorities. Development of adult education in Denmark, established on the basis of ideas advocated by N.F.S. Grundtvig and Christen Kold in the 19th century, is a splendid example of this.

The folk high school movement was developed from the bottom - an educational and cultural project rooted in a suppressed class, the farmers. The idea of educating this group was the result of a situation where the farmers obtained more and more societal importance on the basis of their food production, while being firmly denied access to political and cultural influence.

Grundtvig formulated the ideas of Adult Liberal Education – which targeted the development of the farmers' national consciousness and cultural qualities, primarily with the purpose of enhancing young persons' abilities and commitment to agriculture, but also by providing training in Nordic mythology, history, literature, and Christian faith. Teaching in the folk high schools was to be based on the 'living word'; *i.e.* oral narration and discussions in the Danish tongue, and the students were to lodge at the schools in order for them to join in all the day-to-day practical activities, and not just participate in the learning activities.

The post 1860 years witnessed the establishment of many folk high schools in various rural areas, which helped strengthen the rural population as an organised political power. The Danish tradition of democratisation based on didactically programmed training and considerations for the preconditions of the participants has its very roots in these schools, which also obtained significant impact on areas such as development of the basic school and teacher training in Denmark.

Since 1851, the Danish State has supported the folk high schools financially.

Adult Liberal Education after 1900 - Introduction of evening courses

The folk high school model also dominated the adult education system in the post-1900 years, but now in differentiated forms, depending on how the various ideas were appreciated by different groups in society. The workers' movement, for instance, established folk high schools in order to educate shop stewards and activists. The majority of the urban population, however, were excluded from attending the schools,

implying that the adult education gradually established in urban areas only constituted evening courses. Many of these rather ideologically influenced courses were organised by the workers' movement or so-called radical intellectuals, while the more job-oriented teaching was usually provided by employers. This concept of evening courses constituted the base for the extensive and differentiated supply of evening schools, characteristic of the Danish society since World War II.

Amidst German occupation, a new legislative framework was passed for adult education in 1942 in order to massively support adult learning. The legislation from 1942 was very liberal. There was no control of content and teaching methods. The confrontation with a common enemy united Danish workers and farmers in popular movements, in which adult education proved a significant element.

The post-war period - Modernisation, work, politics, and adult education

The post-war Adult Liberal Education was highly politicised with the consequence that leading political parties each formed their own organisation for Adult Liberal Education, and massive state support would be given to almost any kind of adult education. In the 1960s the post-war period was followed by a period with more apolitical and technically oriented learning, but the student uprising of 1968 and grass root activities of the 1970s necessitated a rehabilitation of the political issues.

Post-war modernisation in Denmark did not leave the adult education system untouched. The urbanisation, for instance, caused the popular and cultural foundation of the early popular education to gradually crumble in the rural areas. The urbanisation implied that adult education had to be adjusted to the wage earners' sphere of life, consequently paving the way for evening courses as the primary way for wage earners to take part in learning.

Concurrently with improvements in general welfare and increased differentiation in the population, the folk high schools gained importance as a rallying point for persons finding themselves on the sidelines of the labour market. The young, the elder, the unemployed, and even university graduates used the folk high schools as a platform for personal development and meaningful gatherings. Popular education accordingly managed to retain its position as a cultural centre, however, no longer founded in class-based ideologies.

The growth of adult vocational training from the end of the 1950s

The Adult Vocational Training (AMU) system has been developed in three phases. In the 1960s and in the early 1970s, the labour market was characterised by full employment and a radical reorganisation of the corporate structure. The manufacturing enterprises recruited employees from agriculture, especially men, and at the same time many women entered the labour market for the first time. The majority of these new workers had, in most cases, very little schooling, and there was a need for a systematic vocational training system as a way of integrating these workers into the labour market as a precondition for the industrialisation of the society. The first AMU Act was passed in 1960, and AMU quickly became a central tool in the overall economic policy.

The second phase of the development of the adult vocational training system took form in the 1970s and the 1980s. Faced with mass unemployment since the mid 1970s the public educational system had to maintain the qualifications of the unemployed and

prepare them to re-enter the labour market, and to prepare the young, women and the (now superfluous) immigrants for (re)integration on the labour market. Those were the years when discussions of the residual groups became a topic, when the principal function of the training was to stimulate interest in further training and education and to meet the labour market needs. The AMU system was extended, and other types of vocational education and training programmes for unemployed were introduced. Training of general qualifications became a recognized element in the vocational education and training programmes, and qualifying education and training programmes of a longer duration were introduced.

The third phase of the development of the AMU system took place in the 1990s. Many enterprises saw competence development as an important competition factor, and it created new requirements for the adult vocational education and training system to provide education and training both to support the growth of the enterprises and to improve the working lives of employees.

General Adult Education centres (VUC) from the end of the 1950s

The creation of General Adult Education (AVU) was originally based on the technical preparatory courses, which were introduced in 1958. In the beginning, teaching was managed by the adult educational associations, the technical schools, or the municipalities. It was established to meet a growing demand for adult education and training. From the end of the 1960s, independent single subject courses were introduced preparing for examination at the basic school level, and, in 1978, they were referred to the county authorities.

In 1984, the Danish Parliament passed a resolution on a ten-item programme for adult education and training and Adult Liberal Education, which, in 1989, resulted in the passing of an Act on General Adult Education including the governance of VUC. This new programme differed from the previous programme by being parallel to, not identical with, the Basic Education System. While the adult students previously had to read the same syllabus and pass the same examinations as the pupils in the primary and lower secondary school, syllabus and examinations were now adapted to the experiences and interests of the adults. This happened without a change of the competence of the examinations. The act from 1989 has been amended during the 1990s, the latest amendment dating from 2000.

Moreover, VUC centres teach adults wanting a level of education higher than the Leaving Examination of the primary and lower secondary school. In 1967, the first pilot projects were initiated to qualify the participants for Higher Preparatory Examination (HF), single subject courses where the teaching is on a level corresponding to the general and vocational upper secondary education level. This programme is characterised by a broad provision of general subjects, suited to the many different needs and plans of the individual adult participants. Higher Preparatory Examination single subject courses were referred to the county authorities together with General Adult Education (AVU). It is now included in the same legal framework as the youth examination.

Danish as a second language for adult foreigners

Teaching started around 1970 as teaching of so-called guest workers, foreign workers and the first refugees, under the then act on leisure time education (evening schools).

The act on teaching of immigrants from 1986 was the first legal indication that teaching of Danish to foreigners was considered a permanent task incumbent on the community, not a task of teaching and integration of a transitory nature. From 1986 to 1998, it was a regional responsibility, carried out by private enterprises, first and foremost the adult education associations. During this period, the language schools developed into real adult education institutions characterised by their affiliation to the Adult Education Associations and the Adult Liberal Education.

As part of the government's increased effort to integrate children, young people and adults, *i.e.* transferring responsibility for the entire integration effort to the local authorities, Parliament passed a new act on teaching of Danish as a second language, taking effect from 1 January 1999. Around 50 language centres were established, which are administered by 40 municipalities. Two thirds of the language centres today are private, attached to the adult education associations. One third of the new language centres are municipal.

The day folk high schools in the 1980s

As repercussions of the economic crisis necessitating assistance to society's ostracised persons, Denmark introduces the day folk high schools. Progress was almost explosive and characterised by a number of more or less unconventional pedagogical measures.

The day folk high schools increased dramatically in number in the 1980s and the 1990s. The target group was primarily people with low levels of education – typically women – having a weak connection with the labour market. The day folk high schools are not a movement like the folk high schools, but are established on the basis of local initiatives with varying contents. The idea has been to provide courses for personal development with a folk high school touch, to clarify the possibilities and wishes of the participants in relation to the labour market. The common Act, and thereby the institutionalisation of the day folk high schools, was not passed before 1991. This has contributed to the day folk high schools having developed very differently both in terms of working methods and in terms of view of the participants. But the shared basis has been the day folk high schools' role of providing adults with non-qualifying training.

In recent years, however, qualifying courses have become part of the aim of the day folk high schools. Teaching must strengthen the participants' personal development and improve their possibilities in the education system and on the labour market.

Special teaching for handicapped adults since 1980

Since 1980, the act on special education for adults with handicaps (physical or mental) has been the legal foundation of compensating special teaching for adults. Teaching is directed at adults with a physical or mental handicap, who, after the end of their compulsory schooling, have a need for relieving or limiting the effects of the handicap. The aim is to further the handicapped person's possibility of taking an active part in society - including participating actively in a profession, in education, and in leisure time activities. Tuition is free and is administrated by the counties, which offer teaching through their own institutions, through government or municipal institutions, adult education associations and private initiators.

The 1980s and the 1990s - Focus on further integration of workplace learning and adult education and training

In 1992, the Danish Parliament decided to establish more vocational education for adults. Vocational Education and Training for Adults (VEUD) gives adults of and above the age of 25 a possibility of becoming skilled through specially planned education, which is considerably shorter than the youth vocational education and training (although conferring identical qualifications), since their job experiences within the area form the basis for credit transfer. VEUD partly fulfilled a goal to reduce the number of adults without vocational education and training, and partly fulfilled a goal to hinder future bottleneck problems on the labour market.

Throughout the last 10 - 20 years, Denmark has experienced a dramatic growth in supplementary training, in-house training, and training supply developed privately, for instance by consulting firms. This type of training was previously limited to managers or training of specialists, but is now to an increasing extent offered to more groups on the labour market. The pedagogical methods tend to vary considerably, from narrow instrumentalist training procedures, to more open and experimenting training forms based on dialogue.

In recent years, labour market and training policies have enjoyed close relations. For instance, this is expressed by the various subsidy schemes allocated for the adult learner. A considerable amount of financial support to development projects has been distributed to integrate public training supply with in-house training. The state may accordingly support development of learners' qualifications to offset marginalisation and ostracism on the labour market.

The 'Scandinavian Model' of strong co-operation between the social partners and the relatively strong government involvement have assigned an important role to adult education and linked the educational system to the demands of the labour market. Also in this respect, the specific Danish democratic tradition concerning education is different from what we know in most other (European) countries.

In the 1990s, interest in theories on learning to challenge the former authoritative educational methods and systems have gained ground also in the Danish educational debate. There is much focus on the ability to 'learn to learn', *i.e.* all teaching must support the individual in finding out his or her own purpose in learning, supported by the experiences of other learners and the reflexivity of the learner. The point of departure where learning and teaching has a fixed starting point is both practically and theoretically challenged by recent theories and the cultural and societal development described.

1.4 Different players in the process

An extensive Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training system has been developed in Denmark and a large number of education and training systems exist, aimed at various target groups and educational needs in the Danish society.

The Danish public adult education and training efforts are the outcome of a number of systems with differing educational or labour market-oriented targets. The training offers are supplied by different institutions, offering courses and training with different contents, goals, and durations. Thus, the Danish system offers a wide range of options for the individuals and enterprises to choose from. Adult Vocational Training is under the Ministry of Labour while all other public adult education falls under the Ministry of Education. Apart from the publicly regulated courses, there also exist a number of private organisations involved in training of adults. It is difficult to assess the full range of the private training effort, but private training had 466,800 participants in 1999[2], which illustrates the sizeable nature of the market. To this should be added the training activities taking place internally in enterprises (on-the-job training, learning by colleague, *etc.*). The following outline will primarily concern the activities taking place in public settings.

The following will provide a description of the institutional set-up for the Danish adult training system as well as the various training institutions and types of training.

The institutional set-up for the adult training system

The overall responsibility for adult education and training in Denmark is shared by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry of Labour is responsible for the Adult Vocational Training programmes, and the Ministry of Education is responsible for the remaining supply of public adult education and training. Labour market policy issues dominate the perspective of the Ministry of Labour, while the education perspective dominates in the Ministry of Education.

Each Ministry has appointed various councils and bodies to establish the framework and influence the establishment of the adult training system including each type of education.

The Ministry of Labour

The Ministry of Labour has superior responsibility for the design of the Adult Vocational Training Programmes (AMU). In Denmark, however, there is a long-standing tradition of the social partners having influence on the identification of vocational training needs and on the design of the adult vocational training. This is reflected in the institutional set-up of the adult vocational training system, where the Continuing Vocational Training Committees are playing a key role, with equal representation of the social partners in these committees.

Upon recommendation from the social partners, the Ministry of Labour has appointed a council for adult vocational training, the *'Uddannelsesrådet for arbejdsmarkedsuddannelserne'* (UR). The Minister appoints the chairperson of the council. In addition to the chairperson, the organisations representing the social partners including public employers are represented in the council, which is appointed for a four-year period. The UR's task is to submit recommendations and opinions to the Minister of Labour concerning bills, orders, training needs, approval of providers of training, establishment and closing down of education and training centres, committees for continued vocational training, approval of training plans, *etc.*

[2] Statistics Denmark no. 208/2000, *Konjunkturstatistik om privat voksenuddannelse – 2. halvår 1999.*

The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education plays a central role in the drawing up of ministerial orders, by order given by Parliament to the Minister of Education. The ministry is responsible for approving state-owned or state-subsidised institutions to offer (adult) education, for allocating funds to the institutions, *etc.* Within the framework of the acts of Parliament, ministerial orders lay down rules for each education, defining aims for teaching, levels of competence, requirements for examinations, *etc.* They lay down rules for quality assessment in the form of *e.g.* external examiners being present at examinations, legal rights of the students. (See also p. 57 on quality assurance.)

Universities traditionally enjoy extensive autonomy in academic questions. Five education councils have been set up for their respective fields (subject-related), with the task of offering counselling to the minister of education on higher education. The budget administration of universities comes within the field of the Ministry of Research.

The outstanding features of Danish vocational education include the state's unobtrusive control function, co-operation between employers and employees and the extensive autonomy of the individual vocational colleges with regard to syllabus and budget administration. The Ministry of Education has a restricted role, which consists of controlling by means of objectives and framework governance.

The co-operation between employers and employees in bodies where they are equally represented at all levels is exemplary. Sectoral Trade Committees, where both parties are equally represented, decide on youth Vocational Educational Training (VET) qualifications and stipulate the training conditions. The Council for Vocational Education is the counselling body as regards overarching VET questions.

Educational counselling of adult education and courses, including Open Education, falls under the same counselling set-up that is responsible for the 'ordinary' courses leading to competencies within the field. The social partners are represented in these councils, except on university level.

There are no special educational councils for the education or teaching in general adult education at the basic level, or in Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*). In the field of folk high schools and other types of Adult Liberal Education, the various organisations play an important role as a 'support base', and some of them are linked with political organisations.

New council structure

Up until September 2000, there were three councils with overarching tasks in adult education: 1) A co-ordinating council addressing the overall adult education and training area by gathering the chairpersons of the councils dealing with education including adult education and training activities (the so-called VEU council). 2) A council on the provision of courses under Open Education. 3) A council on a Support Scheme (VUS) to end 31 December 2000. These three councils will be succeeded by a new council as part of the Adult Vocational Reform, the Adult Education Council.

In Appendix 1, there is an overview of the various councils set up under the ministries in the field of adult learning.

Cooperation between the institutions and the education and training programmes under the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour – at central and local level

Co-operation takes place concerning adult learning activities both between the ministries, among councils and committees – and locally among the educational institutions.

The ministries are responsible for an overall coordination between the education and training programmes and the development of educational and training policy within their respective field, *e.g.* through mutual consultation in connection with the introduction of new education and training programmes or revisions of existing programmes, through economic agreements on how the institutions may buy services from other education systems, through approval of AMU centres to provide some of the vocational education programmes under the Ministry of Education, as well as approval of VET colleges to offer Adult Vocational Training.

Also at the central level there is an interaction between the various councils under the two ministries (see above).

At the local level, AMU centres, VET colleges and VUCs (Adult Education Centres) have a statutory obligation to cooperate, as mentioned in Section 2.2.

Better co-ordination and coherence between education programmes at all levels are pivotal goals of the adult vocational reform, which is described on page 25 and following pages.

1.5 Government policy in the 1990s

1993: New Course Strategy

As described in Section 1.1, the government has taken a number of initiatives to expand and improve the public system of adult education and training. Taking office in 1993, one of the first major steps of the new government was the launching of a set of objectives called 'A New Course'. In 1994, a goal of 60,000 new training places was defined as a supplement to the already existing training places. At the same time, an expansive economic policy was introduced, the aim of which was to encourage the public as well as the private demands. Finally, it was arranged that employees could obtain leave, the purpose of which was to create a situation of increased mobility on the labour market.

The initiatives were carried out in combination with a stronger regulation of the demand for adult education and training, taking the form of free access to training and introduction of a taximeter system for the education and training institutions, linking the public support to a specific institution directly to the number of full-time equivalent students completing the training at the institution (full-time equivalent per year: institutions under the Ministry of Education; per week: AMU-centres). And this, again, was coupled to leave schemes, which turned out to be quite attractive to many employee groups

Box 1: The taximeter system

A taximeter system consists of:

- A public subsidiser.
- One or more public or private providers.
- One or more objective and controllable activity targets.
- One rate per unit for each activity.

Taximeter governed areas in adult education and training:

- Open education (introduced in 1990).
- Vocational colleges (introduced in 1991).
- Further and higher education (1994).
- Private independent boarding schools (folk high schools, *etc.*) (1994).
- AMU (1995).
- Day folk high schools (1996).

Finally, user payment was introduced in a number of schemes. But only for the Open Education and the folk high school schemes did user payment amount to a considerable size, and in 1998 it was completely abandoned in the AMU system.

As a consequence of these initiatives, activities increased considerably within a number of the adult training schemes, to an extent where the growth was difficult to control. This happened for instance within the areas of the AMU system, day high schools, and short training courses under the Open Education scheme.

The basic principle behind the 'New Course' strategy was that almost any form of education was better than long periods of unemployment, which turned out to be a threat to the later return of the long-term unemployed persons to the labour market. And consequently, the right for employees and unemployed to education and training was stressed at the outset of the programme.

1995: Denmark as a pioneer country

In addition to the 'New Course' of 1993, the government published a policy programme in 1995 entitled 'Denmark as a pioneer country', describing the aims of the government until the year 2005. The primary aim of this programme was that, by the year 2005, the Danish educational system (taken as a full system of basic, youth and adult education) should be among the 5 - 10 best in the world, in terms of both quality and effectiveness. Other aims included:

- "The largest possible number of young people should receive education leading to a vocational qualification level.
- As a minimum, 90 – 95 per cent of an age group should have a level of youth education.
- 50 per cent of an age group should have a level of further education.
- Recurrent training should become a natural part of life and participation in society.
- The training system should be organised flexibly and should develop continuously in step with society in order to be able to provide the vocational and personal qualifications needed in a modern technological society based on democratic principles."

10 item plan for recurrent education
In the same year, the last statement but one was specifically addressed through a Ministry of Education 10 item plan for recurrent education. Some of the key principles of this plan were:

- The right of all Danes to support for adult education and continuing vocational training.
- Free admission to training courses so that institutions will accept all participants who meet the admission requirements.
- Provision of training and education by more institutions and determined by demand.
- The introduction of an improved system of merit, and better transparency of the systems.
- The introduction of the principle of user payment (even though this principle only played a major role within a few areas, as described above).

In such sense, both the programme 'Denmark as a pioneer country' and the 10 item plan were a continuation of the labour market and education policy launched at the outset of the new government, each of them contributing to fleshing out and exemplifying the policy.

1999: New system of financing of employment service
However, as the pressure on the labour market increased, there was a parallel increase of the need for active job search and availability on the labour market, and encouragement for participation in a number of schemes was gradually, and to an increasing degree, linked to a policy the focus of which shifted from arranging any form of employment for the unemployed towards a focus on qualifications demanded by the labour market. As a main partner in this process, the Public Employment Service (AF) played an increasingly active and regulatory role as an institution to carry through the policy messages on a daily basis on the labour market. This development was acknowledged as part of the agreements for the Public Budget for 1999, and a new system of administration was introduced:

- A distinction was made between adult education and training as activation of unemployed and as education for employed persons.
- As regards activation of unemployed, the involvement of the funding institution (AF or the municipality) was increased as to the choice of activation for the individual.
- Generally, free admission to training was maintained for employed persons. This was, however, combined with user payment for adult education and training, except for the day folk high schools (which were subject to a ceiling regarding intake) and for the AMU and short courses under Open Education, where framework agreements were introduced for the public subsidies.

In this way, a significant degree of decentralisation of the administration of the adult education and training for the unemployed took place, based on and limited by framework agreements set out and controlled at national level.

Education and training of the individual unemployed is based on a personal action plan prepared in co-operation with the Public Employment Service (AF) or the municipality. The unemployed are admitted to normal education programmes in classes consisting of both unemployed and employed participants, or to programmes specially planned for

unemployed. The education is financed by the Public Employment Service (AF)/the municipality, and the participant receives unemployment benefits during the education.

Finally, it should be mentioned that in the autumn of 1996 the Ministry of Education published a green paper on a new parallel competence system for adult education. The basic idea was that all adults should be given the opportunity to tailor a course of education to their own specific needs and that they should be given credits for their work and life experience. It was suggested that these competencies should either be acquired by completing full programmes or by piecing together a programme from courses or single subject modules. It was stressed that the new competence system was not only meant to reflect the professional knowledge of adults. It was equally meant to weight and render visible the personal qualifications, which are also in demand on the labour market. This green paper was later adopted, albeit in an altered form, as the new Adult Education System (system for basic and further adult education).

Box 2: Adult Vocational Reforms in the 90s – Summary of Sections 1.5 and 1.6

1994 • Widening the AMU target group to include publicly employed and persons with a further technical education. • AMU centres may be approved to provide VET including adult VET (VEUD). • Widening of the open education target group and greater flexibility in provision. • Education Support for Adults (VUS) support period changed from 16 weeks every two years to 40 weeks in all.
1995 • Taximeter financing introduced in AMU. • 'Free intake' introduced in AMU (= the institution may admit all the qualified persons they can accommodate). • Strengthened local school cooperation between AMU centres, VET colleges and VUC (adult education centres). • Improved possibilities for education programmes combining AMU and AVU (general adult education) or HF (higher preparatory examination). • VUS support period extended to 80 weeks and prioritising qualifying education.
1996 • Taximeter financing of day folk high schools.

1.6 Recently approved new adult education and training initiatives

Right now Denmark is introducing a major reform of the vocational education and continuing training system. In May 2000, the *Folketing* (the Danish Parliament) adopted a number of acts, which will tie continuing training and further education programmes together into a single coherent and transparent adult education system. The adult education reform implements a political agreement from 1999 between the Government (the Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party) and a number of other political parties. The agreement is based on a proposal from the Government concerning a reform of the adult education and continuing training activities. The ministries

primarily responsible for adult education and training in Denmark, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour co-operated to draw up this proposal.

The basis for this reform is a general agreement between these parties that the public sector has the overall responsibility for ensuring relevant supply of adult education and training for all. The main political challenges are to create the overall framework for the public education and training and to ensure a high level of quality as well as relevance for society, enterprises, and the individual participants.

Objectives of the reform
The adult vocational reform has three main objectives:

- *To provide relevant adult education and continuing training supply to all adults at all levels, from the low-skilled to university graduates*

The supply of education/training is to constitute a system of competencies that will give all adults formal recognition of the knowledge and qualifications they acquire, whether this takes place on the job or through participation in formal education/training programmes.

- *Improving opportunities for those with the lowest levels of education*

Courses for adults in general subjects, such as reading, spelling, mathematics and continuing vocational training play an important role in the efforts to enhance education/training opportunities for the low-skilled groups. The same applies to the new possibilities for having work experience and participation in continuing training credited as part of an education programme that will give the participants formally recognised vocational competencies.

- *Better utilisation of resources*

In 1998, the Danish State spent 12.7 billion DKK on continuing and advanced training [education and training covered by the analyses of the intergovernmental committee preparing the reform (VEU-report, 1999)]. The adult education reform will make it possible to use the huge resources for adult education in a more cost effective way.

The education programmes within the adult education system are characterised by:

- Being organised for adults in employment.
- Having contents that take into account the work and life experience of adult.
- Their flexible organisation.

With the adult education reform, Denmark is already now living up to the conclusions made by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000, to ensure vocational competencies for all adults.

The agreement was spelled out in a set of paragraphs for adjustment of the existing legal framework for the adult education and continuing vocational training. Based on these principles, a set of bills were introduced and they were approved by the Danish

Parliament in May 2000, to enter into force on 1 January 2001. Some of the principles in the agreement will be described below.

Division of responsibilities and improved quality
Each adult education and training institution should be held responsible for the quality of the education and training supplied, and education should be prepared according to pedagogical principles of adult education.

Increased focus should be on the public approval of institutions with the objective of ensuring that such institutions will supply a substantial amount of and a wide range of training and education activities and so that professional and pedagogical competencies can be maintained and developed at these institutions. For certification, institutions will have to document that the above conditions are available, and increasingly parameters for the quality of the education and training will play a role in the certification.

Public funding should be oriented towards achieving formally recognised competencies for the low educated. The capacity of the institutions should, however, also be made available on market terms to enterprises demanding more specific enterprise-oriented training, as well as to the public employment service and the municipalities. As such, the incentives to supply education and training on market terms without public support should be increased.

Two new systems for adult education
With the Acts approved in May 2000 two new educational systems have been introduced in Denmark:

- Preparatory Adult Education (FVU).
- The Adult Education System, which includes Basic Adult Education (GVU) and three advanced (higher) levels of further adult education.

Preparatory Adult Education (FVU)
This education will start at the beginning of 2001 as part of the new Danish reform in adult education. This initiative was to a large extent prompted by the results of the OECD SIALS survey [Jensen, Torben Pilegaard *et al.*, *Danskernes læse-regnefærdigheder – udvalgte resultater* (Literacy and numeracy skills of the Danes, - selected results), January 2000 (findings based on Danish participation in SIALS)] indicating that in the region of 1 million adult Danes with an affiliation to the labour market have reading skills at a level which is regarded as insufficient in relation to the demands of the knowledge society.

FVU is an offer to all persons at the age of 18 and more, aiming to improve and supplement their basic skills in reading, spelling and written presentation as well as in numeracy, arithmetic and basic mathematical concepts. The objective for the education is to prepare for the working life or for the participation in further vocational education and training. As such, FVU may be regarded as the lowest level of adult vocationally oriented education and training. The actual reading courses will form part of FVU. The tuition will be organised so that it will be in interplay with the daily life of the participants. This means that many of the activities will take place at the daily workplace rather than in educational establishments.

The provision of FVU will be the responsibility of the county councils, either in their own institutions (VUC) or, according to contract, in other schools/institutions.

Basic Adult Education (GVU) - the first level of the Adult Education System
Today, an adult with a low level of education wanting to achieve professional competencies within a trade cannot begin such education without entering into a formal educational contract with an employer. This can often form an obstacle, both for the individual and in connection with filling the social need for professionals.

To avoid such problems, a new Basic Adult Education (GVU) will be established, giving adults an opportunity to obtain – without an apprenticeship – the same level of education and indeed the same professional competencies within a specific trade as could have been obtained through an ordinary youth vocationally oriented education and training. Such education will combine the adults' job experience with individually selected courses which lead to a complete level of vocational education.

As a precondition, the adult candidate must be at least 25 years old and has to pass an individual evaluation of his vocational competency achieved so far and of the courses he has passed so far.

Thus, GVU is a framework for education programmes up to the level of vocational education. At this level, the former education and work experience of the individual participants may be further supplemented by courses in order to achieve a skilled level (equal to vocational education and training).

The target is the same as for the corresponding formally qualifying vocational education and training for young people. Adults who complete a GVU programme pass the same final examinations as young persons in youth education, but a GVU programme is organised in a more flexible manner, and the concrete content of the programme will depend upon the practical work experience of the adult person as well as qualifications attained by participation in various courses.

In other words, a GVU programme is based on the experience and qualifications of the individual in order to make the best possible use of them. Before starting on a GVU programme, participants will go through a competence assessment where an assessment of previous courses and work experience takes place. The school then draws up a personal education plan which shows what the individual is lacking in having a full education. Students will not pay a tuition fee.

The difference from VEUD will be, first of all, the absence of a training agreement with an employer. It is, correspondingly, a precondition that an individual GVU educational plan does not comprise practical training of more than limited duration and scope.

Schools (vocational colleges and AMU centres) will be specially approved to perform competence assessment and draw up a personal education plan.

Advanced levels of further adult education as part of the Adult Education System
The advanced, or higher, levels of further adult education are to ensure options for a gradual development of qualifications for individuals, who have already obtained professional skills or a level of education giving competencies for studies, as well as

two years of relevant working experience. The new system will set up a clear structure of competencies and establish a framework for lifelong education, based on adults' general life experience as well as specific working experience.

There are three overall higher levels:

- Further adult education, first level, corresponding to short cycle higher education level.
- Diploma level, corresponding to medium cycle higher education level.
- Master level, corresponding to long cycle higher education level.

These levels will be in line with and directly comparable to further education of the ordinary education system, and they will be rated in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Such further adult education can be obtained through education in one's leisure time within the Open Education framework.

Improved co-ordination between the levels of education

A new inter-ministerial council will be set up under the Ministry of Education (Adult Education Council) which will succeed the VEU council (*formandsforsamlingen*), the Council for Open Education and the so-called Council for Adult Education (concerning education support for adults), which have in existence until September 2000. The new council will act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Labour and Minister of Trade and Industry in matters concerning the needs within the entire area of adult education and continuing vocational training. The council will offer guidance to the Minister of Education concerning, *i.e.* Open Education, state educational support for adults, as well as guidance to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour on the interaction between state education support for adults (SVU) and the special allowance paid in connection with participation in vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training remuneration schemes (the *VEU-godtgørelse*).

A council will also be set up for general adult education at the basic level. This council is to act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Education concerning the needs for education as well as the interaction between preparatory adult education (FVU), general adult education (AVU), and other education programmes at the basic level.

There is also a need for a stronger co-ordination between vocational education and training and the continuing vocational training (AMU) to ensure that relevant competencies are recognised and made visible across systems. To cater for this demand a catalogue will be elaborated on special skills to allow for certain levels of AMU training to form part of education in professional skills.

In order to improve the co-operation between education in professional skills and the AMU system, the principles of 'taximeter-funding' of current expenditures are harmonised so as to create more equal and comparative conditions - the number of AMU taximeter rates being reduced, as per 1 January 2000, from 25 to 7, thus corresponding to the 8 taximeter rates in the vocational education and training field.

A survey of Taximeter Governance was carried out in 1998 (*Rapport om taxameterstyring; Undervisningsministeriet, Finansministeriet, Arbejdsministeriet*) (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, October 1998).

The development of taximeter income and expenditure shows that the institutions use their freedom to dispose of grants to redistribute among education programmes. Some education programmes yield a profit to the institutions, while other programmes are being run at a loss. The taximeter rates are, therefore, not fully normative for the expenditure on each education programme. This is a consequence of the so-called block grant principle, whereby taximeter grants are given as block grants, at the disposal of the institution.

Another finding was that taximeter rates do not necessarily work fully through, with a change in expenditure to match, at institutional level. A rise in taximeter rate will normally not go in full to the education programmes it was intended for. The same applies for fluctuations in the activity level. As a general rule, adjustments to changes in both taximeter rates as activity at institutional level do not take place immediately: typically, adjustments take a couple of years.

One conclusion of the report was that, as a means of economic governance the use of taximeter systems in the educational sector results in an activity based distribution and redistribution of resources between education sectors, institutions and education programmes. Thus, taximeter governance secures a quick and automatic transfer of resources from areas with low activity to areas in growth. This creates a basis for a swift and dynamic adaptation to new needs. Governance via taximeter rates results in increased visibility and transparency in financing, as well as increased possibility of making political priorities in the education sector.

Another conclusion was that central initiatives with the purpose of influencing provision of education programmes should in general be carried out through other means than changes in taximeter rates (*e.g.* by approval of less, or more, providers – or by activity 'ceilings').

The report recommended that the taximeter system may also be used in other sectors than education where there are unambiguous activity goals enabling the introduction of taximeter governance, and thus functioning as an incentive to local optimising of the existing capacity.

A new framework for adult vocational training (AMU)

A new framework for regulation of adult vocational training will be set up to improve the effectiveness of this system to supply the training demanded on the labour market. Firstly, part of the actual adult vocational training will be made into 'commercial' activities, the customer covering the full costs of the training. Secondly, a new system of funding will be set up with a two-tier system of finance for education, which supplies merit for professional skills and recognised competencies for such skills, respectively. A simplified structure of remuneration for recurrent costs to each educational activity will be established with five to seven levels of remuneration based on a number of criteria, stated in the act, based on recommendation from the Council of Education/the Continuing vocational training Committees. These criteria will be set up in such a way that areas of highest social priority will achieve the highest level of support.

To simplify the management, the actual 50 continuing vocational training committees will be reduced to 12 to 15. Further, the education and training will in the future, by means of the new system for certification and approval, be concentrated on fewer

institutions, and these institutions will have more freedom and a broader framework for the planning and management of the education.

Financing and income basis

It has always been a public task to support further educational activities in Denmark, and this will prevail. Preparatory and general education on the levels up to upper secondary education will be 100 per cent supported by the public sector. As for education and training up to and including the level of vocationally oriented youth education and training, the social partners will, to a large extent, be responsible for the allocation of funds through their membership of the board of the new body which is being set up, the Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training (*Arbejdsmarkedets UddannelsesFinansiering*, AUF). Through their membership, they will be given the possibility of making recommendations to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education concerning a wide number of issues in relation to the adult training up to and including the level of vocationally oriented youth education. One of the main tasks of the board for AUF will be to make recommendations to the Minister of Labour and to the Minister of Education concerning the total need for education and training and the expenditure entailed in the field of vocationally oriented adult education and continued training activities at this level. The AUF board may recommend that enterprises, to a greater extent than now, will have to fund education and training activities which are strictly oriented towards meeting the specific needs of specific enterprises or that contributions from employers are imposed for co-funding of the adult learning activities. The board may also recommend the imposition of an employer to co-finance adult education and continuing training measure.

As for adult education at higher levels, public support will be complemented by user payment.

The SVU has a two tier set-up: the first tier supporting participation in further adult education and general adult education at basic, secondary and upper secondary levels, and the second targeting support for further education at short, medium, and higher education levels. The support for participation in vocational adult and further education aims at ensuring that adults participating in such education will get compensation for lost earnings or for lost opportunities of earnings. It is possible to obtain education support for 52 weeks during a period of maximum 5 years. For the unemployed, it is only possible to obtain support for 6 weeks.

In the future, there will be two options for support to students in connection with further education activities: State educational support for adults (*Statens Voksenuddannelsesstøtte*, SVU) and the allowance (VEU-*godtgørelse*), paid in connection with participation in adult vocational education and training up to and including the level of vocationally oriented youth education (including CVT). This allowance will be administered by the Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training.

The allowance in connection with participation in vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training (the VEU-*godtgørelse*) aims to ensure that adults who participate in such programmes up to the level of vocational education may receive financial support to do so. The allowance is given as compensation for loss of earnings or loss of a job opportunity.

Human resources development in small enterprises
Evaluations have indicated that small enterprises have limited administrative capacity to carry out educational planning, and they may have difficulty in achieving a proper overview of the immense number of adult education and training offered. Public funding for training of employees in such enterprises is only utilised to a very limited extent.

To make up for such deficiencies and to involve the social partners, the AUF board will be obliged to consider means and offers to support the adult training activities in small enterprises, including the educational planning in these enterprises.

Registration fee for VUC courses
The county authorities are responsible for financing and running the adult education centres (VUC). Students pay a minor administrative fee for some, so-called 'central subjects' and are charged a tuition fee (user payment) for the other subjects, within a limit laid down by the minister of education (DKK 400 for AVU subjects and DKK 600 for HF subjects). Students who finish an entire HF examination will have the total payment refunded.

Changes of the tax system
According to the tax regulations, exemption from taxation is granted to employers' support for further education, carried out by the employee with the objective to maintain an income, while employers' support for basic and further education to achieve a basis for a better job is not exempted.

According to the new regulations, a number of employer-supported costs for basic and further education will be exempted from taxation. In addition, costs for transportation in relation to such education can be exempted from taxation, also for unemployed.

New act on folk high schools, *etc.*
In May 2000, a new Act on folk high schools, continuation schools, home economic schools and textile design schools (independent residential schools) was approved. The act states that popular enlightenment (*folkeoplysning*) is the principal aim of this education and it should, consequently, constitute at least one half of the individual student's tuition time. Further, it is introduced in the act that a school must formulate its own foundation of values, and that it should assess its own activity in a systematic manner.

Allocation of financial support to Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*)
Also in May 2000, a new act on allocation of financial support to Adult Liberal Education was approved. New demands were set up for the institution responsible for the education (an association with a board should be formed), so as to clarify responsibility. This, in combination with the aims defined in the legal framework, should help give users and administrators a more well defined working tool in delimiting the concept of '*folkeoplysning*' as a criterion for financial support under this act. In addition, the Act stresses that the activities under the Act should aim at community oriented and value-based popular enlightenment, so that the education will focus on issues of social relevance and public importance.

Monitoring and evaluation
To strengthen the monitoring of the education and training, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Labour will set up specific aims for the adult education and training. Such aims and targets will serve as guidelines for priority-setting of public support to the education activities, and as a basis for systematic monitoring and evaluation in all fields and at all levels. This will complement the actual elaborate monitoring and evaluation efforts, amongst others within the VET education levels.

Changes in the council structure

The Ministry of Labour
The Adult Education Reform will enforce changes in the council structure, the most important change being the setting up of a new Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training (AUF).

The most important task of the board of the AUF Institution will be to submit an annual recommendation to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education concerning the total need for vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training up to and including VET level (skilled level).

The AUF board will also have the following tasks:

- Creating a framework for financing of adult vocational education and training.
- Determining the competence of the parties in connection with recommendations on financing of adult vocational education and training in excess of the government grant.
- Furthering the meeting of labour market and educational purposes regarding maintenance, extension, and improvement of the qualifications of the labour force and furthering a co-ordinated effort in the field.

The educational council for the adult vocational training courses is, however, kept in operation, its field of responsibility being the overall counselling on the development of adult vocational training.

The Ministry of Education
In connection with the newly passed adult education reform, specific changes of the council structure for adult education and training are being implemented.

Under the Ministry of Education, a new council is being set up. The task of this council will be to act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Trade and Industry in various matters concerning the needs in the field of adult education and continuing training. The council will offer guidance concerning, *inter alia*, Open Education, state educational support for adults and the inter-action between state education support for adults and special allowance paid in connection with participation in vocationally oriented adult education and continuing training schemes. The social partners are represented in this Adult Education Council.

This council will succeed three previous councils under the Ministry of Education: 1) A co-ordinating council addressing the overall adult education and continuing vocational training area by gathering the chairpersons for the councils dealing with the adult

learning activities (the VEU Council). 2) A council on the provision of courses under Open Education. 3) A council on a previous Support Scheme (VUS).

Educational counselling (subject-related or programme-related) of adult education and courses, including Open Education, falls under the same counselling set-up, responsible for the 'ordinary' courses leading to competencies within the field. The social partners are represented in these councils, except on university level.

Similarly, a council is being (October - November 2000) set up for the provision of general adult education at the basic level. This council is to act in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Education concerning the needs for education/training as well as the inter-action between preparatory adult education (FVU), general adult education (AVU), and other education programmes at the basic level (*e.g.* day folk high schools). The social partners are also represented in this council.

There are no special educational councils (subject-related *etc.*) for the education/tuition in general adult education at the basic level.

For an overall picture of the council structure in the field of adult education and learning, see Appendix 1.

2. Adult Learning – providers, participants and returns

2.1 Overview of the coherence of adult education and training

Adult education and training is supplied by a number of institutions with varying tasks and objectives, dependent on target group, roles and duration of the training. Various training is also offered by a number of private providers, for instance consultancy firms, supplying various training for adults. The most ordinary private adult training includes computer courses, but also training in management and personnel development is very common.[3]

The basic education system in Denmark is well consolidated, and generally, it is considered to function well. Increasingly, the adult education and continual vocational training system has developed over the last years to 'match' the basic education system in the sense that it allows for adults, who did not achieve certain qualifications when they were young, to start an education and achieve these qualifications as adults. There may be substantial differences between the basic education system and the Adult education and training system (which increasingly will be based on and adapted to an optimal learning process for experienced persons), but the resulting qualifications will be comparable, if not the same. The last pieces in this puzzle, the preparatory adult education (FVU) and the Adult Education System (basic adult education, GVU and further education at advanced levels), are falling into place with the new reform, which enters into force at the start of 2001.

The Adult Education and Continuing Vocational Training system has three principal aims:

- Adult Liberal Education.
- General adult education.
- Vocational education and training.

In the following the principal educational activities are listed for each of these three aims.

Please also cf. the below Table 2.1, the Danish Adult Education and CVT system.

Adult Liberal Education
Adult Liberal Education is formulated in the Act on allocation of financial support to *'folkeoplysning'*, association life, *etc.* (including university extension courses). The fundamental principles of Adult Liberal Education are: free choice of topics, universal access, free initiative and free choice of teachers.

[3] In 1999, 112,100 persons participated in computer courses, while 81,000 participated in management and personnel courses (Danish Statistics Office no. 208/2000).

Folk high school courses. The purpose of the independent residential schools is to provide general youth and adult education on the basis of the tradition of Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*), the focal point of which is the interpretation and meaning of life. Teaching must be of a general nature.

Day folk high schools. The activities are particularly aimed at the unemployed: The principal aim of the courses is *'folkeoplysning'* with special emphasis on strengthening the participants' personal development and improving their possibilities in the education system and on the labour market.

General Adult Education
General adult Education (AVU) is qualifying education organised as single courses followed by examination at the level of upper primary education, with the purpose of giving adults the possibility of improving or supplementing their general knowledge and skills.

Higher Preparatory Examination (HF) offers general education at the secondary level and prepares the students for continued studies. A full-time student may complete the course in two years, but for adults the examination can also be taken on a single-subject basis.

Danish as a second language for adult foreigners. Teaching shall promote and enhance active use of Danish among participants and develop their awareness of Danish culture, contributing to rendering them functional within the Danish society.

Special teaching for adults with handicaps (physical or mental). Teaching and special education assistance aim at relieving or limiting the effects of handicaps.

Reading courses for adults aim at improving adults' abilities in reading and writing the Danish language. These courses will be replaced by Preparatory Adult Education (FVU), as part of the Adult Vocational Reform.

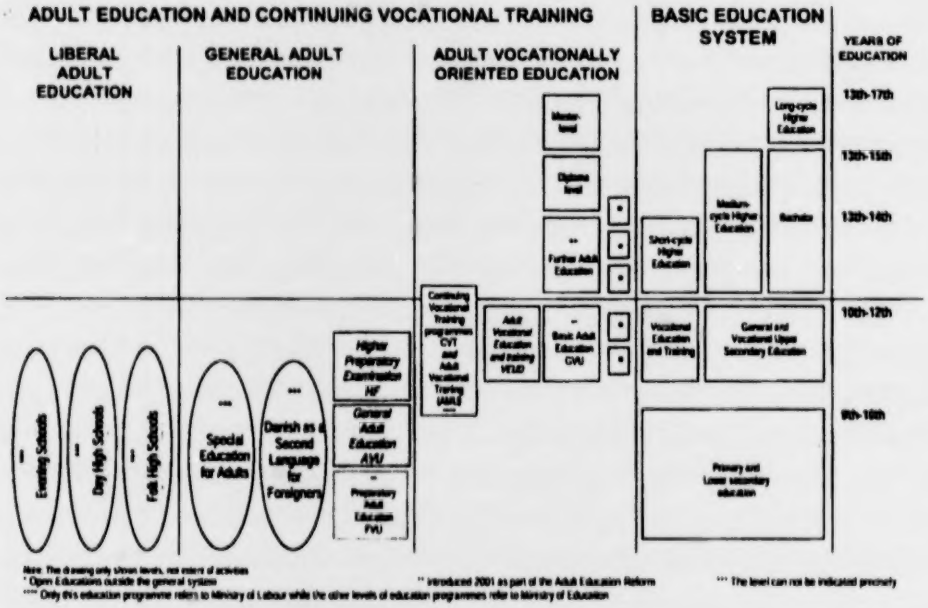
Vocational Education and Training
The Adult Vocational Training (AMU) system offers training to employed as well as unemployed semi-skilled and skilled workers. The training consists of theory as well as practical exercises. It takes the form of specifically targeted training and continued training, based on approved training plans, and normally last one day to six weeks. The training can, however, also be organised as longer integrated training programmes, where the vocational training elements are combined with general education elements.

Adult Vocational Education and Training - VEUD
A VEUD programme is an ordinary vocational education and training alternating between theoretical courses and internship in an enterprise with a training agreement. However, a VEUD programme for adult apprentices is shortened on the basis of relevant workplace experience, *etc.* (credit transfer).

Open Education
Open Education is vocational education on part-time basis aimed at employed adults, at youth education level or higher level. It may consist of special part-time adult education or full-time education organised and offered as part-time courses, as modules from

existing education programmes, or as specific courses or combinations of courses. Participants pay a fee.

Figure 2.1: The Danish Adult Education and Training System



Note: For a full-size version of this figure, see Appendix 2.

The three principal aims of education and training correspond to the three aspects of the overall objectives for the Danish adult educational system: to meet the demands of the labour market/companies for qualified labour, the demands of the society for well versed, active and flexible citizens, and the demands of the individuals for continuously learning and for improved mobility on the labour market. To establish the overall dynamics needed to keep Denmark at the forefront of the international development, economically as well as in respect of enlightening and active participation of broad groups of the population. The political challenge is at any time to strike the right balance among these targets by means of regulation and support.

The principal elements of both the basic education and the adult education and training system are shown in the below figure, which vertically indicates levels of qualifications. In this figure, each of the training and education activities are placed within one of the above three categories. But in fact, all education will have elements of all the three aims.

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Admission requirements to adult learning

A large number of adult levels of education require qualifications in the form of relevant earlier education. This is to assure that participants will be able to follow and pass the education including examinations successfully. Naturally, this holds for academic levels of education and a large number of technical and other specialist levels of education and courses.

For several levels of education, including academic ones, the traditional or normal way of acquiring the relevant qualifications is not regarded as 'the one and only' possibility to become sufficiently qualified to start the education in question. Thus, a number of educational bodies have the right to examine and evaluate the relevant qualifications of individual applicants and to accept them as participants in case of positive results of the evaluation. This is naturally the case for applicants from other countries, but it holds for Danish applicants as well.

2.2 Adult education and training providers

Administration of the training institutions

The division of responsibility in connection with operation and administration of the individual training institution is attended by the state or local governments. Some training institutions are administered by the state (Ministry of Education or Ministry of Labour), while the local governments administer the others. The table below briefly outlines the division of responsibility concerning each training institution.

Table 2.1: Division of responsibility between state and local government in connection with various adult learning activities.

Education activity/	State	County authority	Municipal authority
FVU (Preparatory Adult Education) *		X	
GVU (Basic Adult Education) *	X		
AVU (General Adult Education)		X	
HF (Higher Preparatory Examination)		X	
VEUD (Adult Vocational Education and Training)	X		
AMU (Adult Vocational Training)	X		
Open Education	X		
Day folk high schools	X		
Folk high schools	X		
Teaching Danish as a second language for adult foreigners and others			X
Special teaching for adults with handicaps **		X	
University extension courses	X		
Educational associations (evening schools)			X

* These levels of education are introduced as part of the adult education reform, commencing on 1 January 2001.

** This level of education will be replaced by FVU on 1 January 2001.

Interaction between providers

Within the field of adult learning one can find both co-operation and competition - sometimes even between the same providers. This is the case for public providers, between public and private providers and between private providers.

In earlier years, focus was more on competition between schools and educational institutions. The basic idea was that the market mechanism would be the optimal way of regulating the supply, quality and price of the education and training services. Today, however, there is more focus on joint and shared organisation and work, and on the co-operation between institutions.

Especially between public suppliers there are many different forms of co-operation, thereby creating common advantages, *i.e.* each partner has at least one advantage by doing so. In the following we give an overview of types of co-operation mainly between public providers:

- Sharing of teachers, primarily temporary staff.
- Agreement on referring applicants to each other (in the case that a supplier cannot fulfil an applicant's educational needs).

- Joint visitation of applicants.
- Joint advice to enterprises, *e.g.* concerning their strategy on adult learning.
- Shared educational projects, often involving different types of suppliers, *e.g.* public and private ones.
- Joint marketing, primarily for suppliers of the same type.
- Co-operation on training courses of long duration, *i.e.* sequences of courses conducted successively for the same participants on different schools.
- Acceptance of teachers from another supplier for practical teacher training.
- Joint use of facilities.
- Agreement concerning market segmentation between several suppliers of the same type.
- Finally, there is a form of co-operation (or co-existence) to prevent the parties involved from 'competing each other to death'. This can be observed especially between providers of the same kind, *e.g.* among technical schools, commercial schools, AMU centres.

AMU-centres, vocational schools and VUC centres have the legal obligation to co-operate with each other by so-called local school co-operation.

Competition/overlap/co-operation between providers

Overlapping supply does not necessarily pose a problem; on the contrary, in a demand-driven system it is a precondition for competition between various providers. Indeed, increased competition was one of the aims of the legal reform of adult vocational training in 1995.

As part of the preparations leading up to the adult vocational reform, a survey of the provision of adult education and training was carried out in order to establish whether and to what extent education programmes were actually overlapping [Konsulentfirma Poula Helth (consultancy firm), 1999]. The survey of the four chosen areas showed that overlapping was comparatively limited in the social and health service area, even less in the transport area where overlap only exists between public and private providers. On the other hand, the survey showed that the appearance of new educational needs without any natural affiliation with some existing adult educational system or type of institution such as ICT and opinion-forming, together with the demand for broader qualifications and in combination with the actual demand-driven supply, has lead to the supply, within all educational systems, of education programmes or courses aiming at both vocational, general and personal qualifications. This may lead to overlapping supply within various educational systems in the sense that there is a greater or lesser degree of identity regarding contents and target group.

Overlapping of various educations/courses poses a problem insofar as the financial conditions for the various educations/courses vary substantially, or/and insofar as this contributes to reducing the clarity from the point of view of the users, the providers and the politically responsible partners. Examples of this have been known in various systems of vocationally oriented education and training as well as in the field of general education and Adult Liberal Education.

The outcome, as part of the adult vocational reform 2000, was that the policy of competition between providers was abandoned in favour of a co-operation model, based on division of labour among the education programmes.

2.3 Participation in adult learning

In this chapter, we will present aspects of participation in adult learning: Profiles of adult learners, barriers limiting participation in adult learning and attempts to overcome them.

Adult learners, a heterogeneous group
Participants in the Danish adult education and training system are different in terms of a number of criteria. Employed and unemployed adults participate in adult learning for different reasons - sometimes more, sometimes less voluntarily (*e.g.* participation initiated by their employer or public authorities) and they participate for different lengths of time ranging from a few days to several years.

There are employees wanting to acquire new, or improve their qualifications on the labour market, prompted by the employer or the employees themselves, and there are unemployed hoping to achieve employment on the basis of a vocationally qualifying course.

Other adults want to upgrade their education to be able to participate in the basic education system. Some of these adults do it because they are motivated and interested in more education, while for others it is necessary to have a new education, since they cannot continue in their former jobs because of, for example, work-related injuries.

Refugees and immigrants with language problems participate in language courses making it possible for them to enter the labour market. Finally, there is a broad group of participants who participate in Adult Liberal Education where the learning combines personal interests and hobbies with issues also relevant for the working life.

To stimulate adults to participate in adult learning, initiatives have been taken in the various Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes in order to take advantage of participants' individual qualifications and merits acquired in earlier education or in working life. These programmes do not operate solely on the basis of standardised admission criteria, but attempt to build upon the individual qualifications already achieved formally as well as non-formally (credit transfer). That means that the precondition for participating in a specific course may constitute both documentation of formal participation in a preparatory course or qualifications and experiences corresponding to these demands.

As can be seen in the below table, the adult participants in education and training are distributed on a large number of different education and training programmes.

Table 2.2: Student full-time equivalent, 1993-1999

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Day folk high schools	5,600	7,300	8,575	10,291	12,687	13,454	9,456
AMU courses	11,300	11,700	11,500	11,620	13,940	17,425	13,660
Folk high schools, long courses 1)	5,598	6,049	5,883	5,515	4,742	4,319	4,151
Folk high schools, short courses 1)	1,771	1,729	1,595	1,522	1,330	1,326	1,298
VUC, higher preparatory examination 8)	12,730	12,034	13,553	13,996	13,154	13,915	13,915
VUC, general adult education 8)	13,652	14,005	14,745	15,595	14,256	14,570	14,570
Open Education (further and higher level) 2)	10,479	11,214	13,727	14,781	16,081	13,990	14,183
Open Education (VET level) 9)	13,346	12,994	16,232	17,438	17,262	27,819	17,617
VEUD (adult VET) 3)	-	-	1,420	760	1,144	1,928	2,579
Home economic schools and textile design schools	1,217	1,145	1,183	1,088	849	826	821
Danish as a second language 4)	11,880	12,986	13,647	16,214	16,141	16,464	17,829
Special education for adults 5)	-	-	1,153	1,182	1,197	1,738	1,738
Reading courses for adults 5)	-	-	-	234	428	628	628
Ministry of Trade and Industry	-	-	-	-	28	172	135
Ministry of Culture 6)	-	-	-	205	235	178	149
Ministry of Food 7)	180	195	240	190	160	150	75
Private supplementary education					8,000	7,800	7,200
Total	87,772	91,362	104,553	110,631	121,634	136,703	120,004

1) Long courses last 12 weeks or more – short courses last less than 12 weeks. 2) Incl. further training of teachers and educators.
3) Only include participants for whom additional benefits are paid. 4) Preliminary figures. There are 756 hours per student full-time equivalent.
5) There are no figures for 1999. Therefore, 1998 has been used in 1999.
6) There are no figures from the Danish Music Council for 1998 and 1999.
7) The Ministry of Food. Courses for farmers.
8) There are no figures for 1999. There are 925 course hours per student full-time equivalent.
9) Incl. PGU year students with credit transfer and retraining of domestic service assistants.

Source: The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Statistics Denmark, 2000.

Tables 2.3: Number of completed courses or passed single-subject exams

2.3.1. Dropout and participation in exams in General Adult Education (AVU) and Higher Preparatory Examination (HF) single subjects 1998/99

	Course participants dropping out before the exam	Course participants completing tuition but failing to sit for exam	Course participants completing both course and exam
AVU	22.7 %	37.6 %*	39.7 %
HF	38.5 %	10.3 %	51.2 %

* In AVU a course is completed if the participant has been present during at least 80 % of the tuition (as from 1999: 85 %, same as for HF).
Source: *Amtsrådsforeningen* (The Association of County Councils in Denmark), 2000.

2.3.2. Total number of participants in open education at VET colleges: Number of participants, passed, not passed, and other leaving forms

Year	Participants in subjects	Completed		Ongoing	No exam requirements	Discontinued		Other dropout or leaving
		Passed	Failed			Not shown up for exam	Broken off before exam	
1996/97	157114	25 %	3.4 %	4 %	43.3 %	16.4 %	8 %	0.02 %
1997/98	253624	16.9 %	1.9 %	20.9 %	26.3 %	29 %	5 %	0.01 %

Source: The Ministry of Education.

2.3.3. Number of starting and completing participants in qualifying AMU from 1995 to 1998

Year	Participants started on qualifying AMU	Participants completing with certificate	Passing rate
1995	292137	276927	94.8
1996	317024	300914	94.6
1997	354944	326740	92.1
1998	395097	358933	90.8

Source: The National Labour Market Authority.

Profile of adult learners by socio-demographic features

Apart from the four earlier mentioned archetypes of participants in publicly financed adult education and continuing vocational training, it is of course relevant to study participants' educational background before they commence on adult learning.

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The participants' educational background before they commence adult education and training appears from the following table:

Table 2.4: Educational background of the participants in adult education and training, 1998

	Day folk high schools	AMU (1996)	Folk high schools (long courses)	VUC (General adult education)	VUC (Higher Preparatory Examination)	Open education ((vocational colleges)	Entire country 1)
Basic school	**54.5%**	**33.7%**	**33.5%**	**52.8%**	**26.7%**	**14.2%**	**33.6%**
General upper secondary education	**8.5%**	**3.2%**	**45.3%**	**3.9%**	**23.2%**	**4.8%**	**5.1%**
VET	**27.5%**	**52.8%**	**17.1%**	**33.1%**	**31.0%**	**56.6%**	**38.5%**
Short cycle higher education	**4.4%**	**5.3%**	**1.8%**	**4.4%**	**6.0%**	**8.0%**	**6.9%**
Medium-cycle higher education	**3.6%**	**3.8%**	**1.5%**	**5.0%**	**9.2%**	**11.2%**	**10.2%**
Long-cycle higher education	**1.5%**	**1.2%**	**1.0%**	**0.8%**	**3.9%**	**5.1%**	**5.7%**
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

1) The entire population of 1997 between the ages of 25 and 64, both years included.

Source: The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Statistics Denmark, 2000.

In short, one third of all participants in adult learning had the shortest possible school education; about 40 per cent had a vocational education and about one fourth of all participants had some kind of further education higher than basic vocational. These findings more or less determine the starting position and the pedagogic platform for teaching within the field, which has to be taken into consideration when the education and training are designed and implemented.

As regards the question of which sector the adult learning participants come from, the picture is differentiated between the various types of businesses or commercial activity:

Table 2.5: Employed participants divided according to line of business, 1998

	Day folk high schools	AMU (1998)	Folk high schools (long courses)	VUC (AVU)	VUC (HF)	Open Education (vocational schools)	All
Agriculture & Fisheries	2.2%	2.1%	4.3%	3.3%	1.7%	3.8%	3.3%
Industry	14.6%	34.1%	9.4%	19.9%	10.1%	14.7%	14.5%
Construction Industry	1.9%	6.4%	2.9%	3.2%	1.9%	2.6%	2.5%
Commerce & Catering	15.7%	11.9%	23.3%	13.6%	16.0%	14.8%	15.1%
Transport & Communication	4.7%	10.2%	4.4%	5.5%	5.3%	5.4%	5.4%
Financing & Business	12.1%	6.3%	10.1%	8.9%	10.9%	32.6%	23.7%
Public/personal services	47.2%	24.3%	43.9%	43.0%	51.7%	24.3%	33.6%
Other	1.6%	4.7%	1.8%	2.6%	2.3%	1.8%	2.0%
All	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Statistics Denmark, 2000.

Regarding the size of the enterprises of the employed participants in adult learning, the most recent available figures for 1998 show only little difference between different sizes of enterprises. Each category of enterprise size is represented by about 14 - 17 per cent - except for the smallest enterprises. Employees in small enterprises with only 1 - 4 employees participate considerably less in adult learning than employees in enterprises of any other volume, whereas employees in enterprises with 5 - 19 employees are over-represented in participation. It seems as if the smallest enterprises cannot afford the absence of their employees from the workplace, whereas enterprises somewhat larger perhaps are more aware of the need for employee participation in adult learning, and are more willing to pay for it.

Table 2.6: Employed participants distributed according to size of workplace, 1998

	Day folk high schools	AMU (1998)	Folk high schools (long courses)	VUC (General adult education)	VUC (Higher preparatory ex.)	Open education (VET colleges)	All
1 - 4 employed	7,6%	4,0%	5,1%	8,9%	6,9%	8,0%	5,8%
5 - 19 employed	25,5%	15,4%	30,0%	20,6%	23,1%	22,0%	18,6%
20 - 49 employed	19,3%	14,5%	23,1%	16,6%	18,4%	16,7%	15,8%
50 - 99 employed	13,2%	14,1%	12,5%	14,1%	13,5%	13,4%	13,8%
100 - 199 employed	13,5%	15,1%	10,7%	13,5%	12,2%	12,2%	13,8%
200 - 499 employed	11,5%	18,1%	8,9%	12,6%	11,4%	11,2%	15,5%
500+ employed	9,4%	17,9%	6,7%	13,6%	14,5%	16,6%	16,7%
All	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Note: The size of the workplace is not necessarily identical with the size of the enterprise.

Source: The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Statistics Denmark, 2000.

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Barriers to participation in adult learning

The barriers to participation in adult vocational education and training can be related to the different players in the area.

Participants

Naturally, a very important precondition for adult learning is the interest and willingness of people to participate - without students no training. Therefore, many of the obstacles to adult learning are to be found within the participants themselves. Adults lacking tradition of education in the family or among the people who surround them may find it an almost impossible task to sign in as a student. The social background of the potential participants may turn out to be a lever or a barrier.

Unfortunately, many adults with none or with only a low level of education recall poor experiences from their primary school days. Many of those left school because they felt that they failed to meet the demands. The mere thought of returning to school makes them feel uncomfortable.

New surveys indicate that particularly middle-aged unskilled male workers sustain severe difficulties in negotiating the barriers of commencing adult learning [Christensen, Lillian; Dupont, Søren; Gale, Tricia; Hansen, Leif (1998); Dupont, Søren; Hansen, Leif (1997); Teknologisk Institut, Arbejdsliv (Danish Technological Institute, Human Resources Development): *Efteruddannelse af medarbejdere over 40 år* (1998)]. These men prefer obtaining new qualifications in connection with the work performance, implying that they participate in general qualifying courses to a considerably less degree than females of the same age.

Furthermore, it can be a barrier to participate in adult education that the participants often have to live with a reduced income during the time of their participation in adult learning.

Enterprises

For the majority of participants in adult learning who are working, the employer may constitute an obstacle. A lot of the training and learning activities take place in the daytime implying that the employees have to take time off and leave the premises to attend the training institution/school. As already mentioned, this is especially problematic for the smallest enterprises. To meet these needs training institutions and schools are becoming more and more flexible and if possible they carry out the 'courses' in the evening or the weekends.

In general, senior managers are more likely to stimulate and approve of the employees participating in adult learning than are shop stewards or other middle managers. The reason is that many middle managers have themselves been recruited form the 'floor' and tend to feel insecure if employees obtain 'too much' education. Moreover, the middle managers are left with the operational problems when employees are absent from work, and furthermore risk being confronted with new demands and questions upon their return.

Finally, some enterprises feel insecure as to whether further training is in fact beneficial to their enterprise or whether they perhaps risk losing the employee in whom they have

invested training resources. This issue particularly concerns courses of long duration, but it only appears very rarely, due to the prevalent understanding of the importance of training. Another limitation to participation from the point of view of the enterprises may be the funding of participation, especially in case of limited or lacking public subsidy.

Most collective bargains between trade organisations and employers today include agreements as to which rights and means employees possess in relation to training. This has been achieved on the basis of employees and employers acknowledging the common interest in qualification of employees.

Barriers in schools and centres for adult education and continuing vocational training

Experiences in Denmark show that limitations for participation can appear even here. As the system works now, schools have to ensure a certain income/cost ratio for each of their activities, necessitating an allocation for each participant signing up. There has to be a certain number of participants before a class is allowed to start. If that number has not been reached within time, the course is cancelled. Financial reasons of this kind can limit a school's possibilities of establishing special classes for participants with certain conditions for participation, *e.g.* age or degree of job experience.

Another limiting fact may be that adult education and learning institutions and bodies do not always adjust their counselling activities for the potential participants, *e.g.* schools primarily offering youth training may sustain difficulties in adjusting to needs and desires of adults.

2.4 Danish adult learning

The total 'vertical' range of adult learning in Denmark is tremendous (as it is in many other countries): From unskilled workers receiving a short informal instruction to handle a machine in a factory to people who get a formal instruction of perhaps one week on an AMU centre - to post graduate students at universities and other high schools, to physicians having completed their university education and learning practical aspects of 'the art of medicine' from their chief colleague. The same diversity can be regarded on the more or less 'horizontal' level of vocational education and training for adults.

For an overview of the coherence of the education and training, please see Table 2.1.

Reading Courses for Adults

(Consolidated Act No 658 of 3.7.00)

The aim of these special courses is to improve adults' abilities in reading and writing the Danish language. From the beginning of 2001 these courses will be replaced by Preparatory Adult Education (FVU), which form a part of the Adult Vocational Reform.

Special Teaching for Adults with Handicaps (physical or mental)
(Consolidated Act No 658 of 3.7.00)
Every county council is responsible for providing persons with a physical or mental handicap within the region, who are past compulsory education, with teaching and special educational assistance aiming at relieving or limiting the effects of these handicaps (compensating special education).

Since 1980, the act on special education for adults with handicaps (physical or mental) has been the legal foundation of compensating special teaching for adults. The aim is to further the handicapped person's possibility of taking an active part in society - including participating actively in a profession, in education and in leisure-time activities. Tuition is free and is administrated by the counties, which offer teaching through their own institutions, through government or municipal institutions, adult education associations, private initiators, *etc.*

General Adult Education (AVU)
(Consolidated Act No 668 of 7.7.00)
General adult education is qualifying education, organised as single courses followed by examinations, with the purpose of giving adults the possibility of improving or supplementing their general knowledge and skills. The education must strengthen the participants' qualifications for an active contribution to a democratic society and for understanding and influencing their own situation in life. It must give the participants a possibility to acquire general qualifications preparing for further education and general knowledge and skills that are relevant to working life. Everybody of at least 18 years of age has the right to attend and to choose one or more of theses centres for education in general topics like Danish, foreign languages, mathematics, natural sciences, ICT, psychology. Adult Education Centres (VUC) are financed by the county council. Students pay a minor registration fee for some, so-called 'central subjects', and are charged a tuition fee for the other subjects, within a limit (DKK 400 as from 1 February 2001).

Higher Preparatory Examination (HF)
(Consolidated Act No 755 of 8.8.00)
The Higher Preparatory Examination (HF) is above all directed towards young people and adults who have left the education system and wish to return. Like the 'gymnasium', the HF-courses offer general education as well as prepare the students for continued studies. A full-time student may complete the course in two years, but for adults the examination can also be taken on a single-subject basis or as a combination of subjects to form a complete examination over a longer period of time. Single subjects or even a complete 'HF'-examination may be taken on a private basis. In order to be admitted to a higher preparatory examination course in one or more subjects, the student must have finished lower secondary education at least one year before admission to the course and be accepted by the 'HF'-institution as qualified. Students wishing to be admitted directly from the basic school to a two-year course must have completed ten years of basic school and must be considered qualified by their schools. 'HF'-subjects are comparable to 'gymnasium'-subjects as to level, but differ somewhat in contents. A number of optional subjects, however, are identical in both types of education.

Less than half of the institutions offering the Higher Preparatory Examination course are attached to 'gymnasiums' offering mainly full-time two-year courses (youth

education). Adult Education Centres (VUC) offer 'HF' mainly as single subjects. All these schools/centres are financed by the county council. Students pay a minor registration fee for some, so-called 'central subjects', and are charged a tuition fee for the other subjects, within a limit (DKK 600 as from 1 February 2001).

VEUD - Adult Vocational Education and Training
[Consolidated Act No 724 of 25.7.00 on Vocational Education and Training (VET)]
VEUD was established in 1992 in order to give adult participants the possibility of taking a vocational education and training on 'adult conditions'.

A VEUD is an ordinary Vocational Education and Training (VET) with theoretical courses in a state-subsidised vocational college (technical or commercial) alternating with internship in an enterprise with which the student has signed a training agreement. The training is finished with an ordinary examination or a journeyman's examination. The special thing about VEUD is that the adult apprentices can shorten their training time on the basis of relevant workplace experience (credit transfer), and that the employers receive a higher wage supplement than for apprentices on ordinary conditions. Add to this that during the entire training the adult apprentice normally receives wages that correspond to that of a semi-skilled worker. This means that the education and training is a proper alternative to unskilled work.

AMU - Adult Vocational Training
(Act No 399 of 31.5.00)
The adult vocational training system is the largest system of adult education oriented towards the labour market in Denmark with more than 550,000 'participant-weeks' per year.

Adult vocational training activities at AMU take the form of specifically targeted training and continued training for adults and have the following objectives:

- To give, maintain and improve the vocational skills of the participants in accordance with the needs and background of the enterprises, the labour market and the individual persons.
- To solve restructuring and adaptation problems on the labour market in the short perspective, and to contribute to a general lift in the qualifications on the longer perspective.

AMU is a labour market political tool and, therefore, has other purposes than the strictly educational purposes.

The training is based on approved training plans and consists of theory and practical exercises. The qualifications that a person obtains by participating are formally recognised by the social partners and generally well known and accepted on the labour market. These training programmes give nationally recognised competence. The training normally last one day to six weeks, but can also be organised as longer integrated training programmes, where the vocational training elements are combined with general education elements. The social partners have set up 50 committees (from 1st of January 2001: 15) for continuing vocational training, which are responsible for developing training programmes in their respective sectors or occupational fields. Adult vocational training is without participant fee.

'Open Education'
[Consolidated Act No 861 of 2.9.00 on Open Education (vocationally oriented adult education) Act on Open Education]
The Act aims at furthering a broad provision of vocational education to the adult population. Organisation of the education programmes/courses must take into consideration the adult population's practical possibilities of combining education and a place on the labour market either by part-time organisation for employed (including employed receiving adult educational support or allowance) and unemployed with work availability commitment - or by full-time organisation during a certain period for employed (including those receiving support/allowance) and unemployed without work availability commitment during their education. The education activities must lie within the field of the Ministry of Education.

Open Education is first of all vocational, 1) part-time education, or 2) full-time education organised and offered as part-time courses, 3) single course subjects (modules) from existing education programmes, 4) subject-specific courses, 5) short courses and 6) specially composed education programmes. The education programmes or courses according to 1 and 2 shall be organised part-time so that persons, who are employed full-time, may follow the courses. The participants are entitled to an educational programme organised in module(s). Open Education is offered at institutions approved to provide vocational education at youth education level and further and higher education level. It is 'taximeter-financed', combined with tuition fees. Participants often pay considerable tuition fees.

Diploma and Master education are being offered exclusively under the conditions of Open Education. As from 1 January 2000, the new levels in the adult vocational system as part of the Adult Education Reform, Advanced Adult Education and the GVU programme, will also be offered under Open Education; (participants at the GVU level will pay no tuition fees).

Day folk high schools
(Consolidated Act No 813 of 21.8.00)
The day folk high schools offer Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*). Their activities are particularly aimed at the unemployed, and schools are located close to the participants' homes. The day folk high schools offer the following courses to persons of at least 18 years of age: 1) Courses, the principal aim of which is Adult Liberal Education. Following the tradition of the residential folk high schools, special emphasis is put on strengthening the participants' personal development and improving their possibilities in the education system and on the labour market, including employment in flex jobs, and contribute to developing the participants' interest in and ability to an active contribution to a democratic society. 2) Preparatory Adult Education, according to the new Act on FVU (from 1 January 2001). 3) Courses combining 1 and 2.

The schools offer a wide range of activities with cultural, social, creative and aesthetic aspects. Teaching covers both general and vocationally oriented topics. Courses normally last 4-24 weeks. The day folk high schools are formally private institutions. However, all schools receive financial support in the form of a basic grant from the municipality and a state grant that goes towards the operational expenditure.

Participants may receive social benefits during the course and pay a minimum fee of DKK 30 per week.

Folk high school courses
(Act No 479 of 31.05.00 on folk high schools, continuation schools, home economics schools and textile design schools (independent residential schools)
The institutions under this Act are self-governing institutions. The purpose of these schools is to provide general youth and adult education on the basis of the Danish tradition of Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*), the focal point of which is the interpretation and meaning of life. Teaching must be of a general educational nature so that individual subjects or subject groups never dominate general aspects. As part of this concept, the schools are residential, and generally the participants help with practical chores. All schools receive a state grant for each 'full-time' participant.

Courses vary between 1 and 36 weeks. Each school is free to decide the contents of its teaching. Consequently, the subjects offered differ from one school to another. Most schools, though, offer courses in literature, music, psychology, drama, social studies and art. Schools, which offer topics such as philosophy, Christianity and religion, are in great demand. Other schools focus more narrowly on specific subjects such as sports, drama, music and art. The fee paid by the participant varies from school to school. The average fee is DKK 4,000 per month. This covers board, lodging and tuition.

Danish as a second language for adult foreigners and others
(Act No 108 of 11.2.00 on Danish as a second language for adult foreigners and language centres)
The objective of teaching Danish as a second language for adult foreigners is for the students to acquire knowledge about and skills regarding understanding and using Danish on the basis of their own language and cultural backgrounds. Such teaching shall promote and enhance active use of Danish among participants, and shall develop participants' awareness of Danish culture, thus contributing to rendering them functional within the Danish society. Teaching shall provide participants with opportunities to acquire basic prerequisites for further education and common skills and knowledge, which are relevant in relation to working life, and which enhance participants' active participation in the Danish society. The municipal council shall offer training in Danish as a second language to adult foreigners who are registered in the residence register as residents of the local authority (municipality of residence). Topics are the Danish language, Danish culture and society. The local councils are responsible for the language centres.

Adult Liberal Education, evening schools
[Act No 480 of 31.05.00 on allocation of financial support to Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*), association life, *etc.*]
The act lays down guidelines for the allocation of financial support by local authorities. The municipality is free to set the overall allocation. However, it must include support for adult education, activities for children and young people and facilities for sports, youth associations and clubs. The fundamental principles of '*folkeoplysning*' (Adult Liberal Education) are: free choice of topics, universal access, free initiative and free choice of teachers. The participants' tuition makes up a minimum of 1/3 of the expense.

University Extension Courses
University extension courses are also covered by the act on financial support to Adult Liberal Education (*folkeoplysning*). University extension courses are conducted by extramural departments at Danish universities offering a very large range of short courses (one week or so) with topics in many academic areas. Furthermore, they offer long courses lasting several weeks or months giving a 'deeper' level of education in many sciences. Participants pay a fee.

Private institutions and bodies
Last but not least, there are (as in many other countries) private institutions and bodies supplying education and training, often within areas like management, communications, data processing and ICT. Some of them supply very specialised training as *e.g.* typewriting. Normally participation in private education and training is fully paid by the participants or their employers.

Guidance systems
The educational guidance systems in Denmark have been considerably extended over the last decade. They are widely proliferated and characterised by many different entries for the users.

The Council for Educational and Vocational Guidance (*Rådet for Uddannelses- og Erhvervsvejledning* - RUE) is responsible for the co-ordination of the many schemes.

The Act on educational and vocational guidance (RUE) states that guidance shall be given by the public employment service, by schools and other educational institutions as well as by other authorities and institutions.

As the system functions today nearly everybody has contact with the guidance system at least two times in his or her life; in the school system and in youth education. After that, most people come into touch with other parts of the guidance system, for instance in connection with higher education, adult vocational training, through the public employment service or the guidance schemes of the municipal authorities. Young persons who drop out of school or youth education must be offered guidance by the youth guidance in the municipality where the young person is residing.

A distinction can be drawn between centrally managed schemes and other schemes. There are considerable variations in the nature and scope of the schemes. This is due to the fact that some are centrally managed. In a number of cases the guidance schemes are designed in the individual institutions. This ensures that the users get exactly the type of guidance they need in that place.

There are also variations in the purpose of the guidance schemes. A number of schemes are strongly employment-oriented, but often it is a matter of educational guidance with a job-oriented perspective. Some of the schemes also offer other types of guidance.

Vocational guidance is offered in many forms. In some education/training programmes the guidance is to a wide extent incorporated into the education in the form of collective information or in the form of specially organised activities. In addition, it is possible to have individual guidance interviews, for instance in connection with admission, completion or considerations concerning further education. Other arrangements could

be information meetings about different possibilities for further education and open-house arrangements in education/training institutions.

2.5 Enterprises and on-the-job training (formal and non-formal learning)

On-the-job learning is a typical form of learning in Danish enterprises even though the potentials of this type of learning have obtained focus only recently. Many enterprises are not conscious of most of the in-house learning procedures, in spite of the fact that all instruction and learning about working processes, equipment, machinery, kinds of materials for production *etc.* in most enterprises is conducted at the workplace, either in the employees' department or on his/her working place itself.

In Denmark, it is now commonly accepted to distinguish between the following forms of learning and training:

Institutionalised, school-based education
It includes public and private provision of basic and advanced adult education or training. Examples comprise adult vocational training course activities offered by the AMU, VET colleges (technical and business schools), and even privately offered course activities, also by commercial organisations, *etc.*

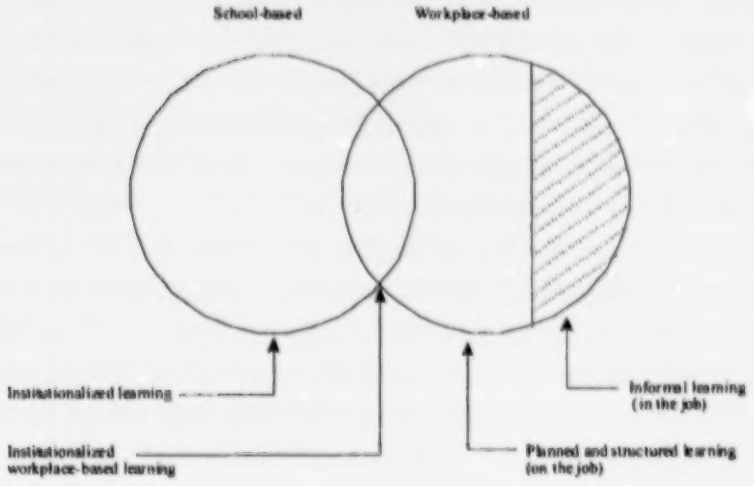
Institutionalised, job-related training
It is conducted at the workplace, but training is administered externally - by private or public institutions, teachers, consultants, *etc.* The course objectives are frequently defined in external training plans. In some cases, the objectives will be determined by the company, for instance upon an acquisition of a tailored course. The training process will, however, be administered by external teaching staff. The training activities are typically conducted within fixed limits. Examples: in-service adult training, job training for unemployed, institutionalised adult vocational training, as well as tailored and open courses conducted at the workplace.

Planned and structured in-house learning activities (on the job learning)
The learning is conducted by the company. The activities comprise formalised introductory courses, learning from colleagues, development projects, discussion groups, and individual learning processes within work-related assignments. The activities may be consultancy-supported or exclusively internally managed, implying that the delineation towards the institutional workplace courses is relatively vague.

Non-formal in-house learning activities (in the job learning)
This is training conducted as a natural and integral part of the work, *i.e.* learning processes conducted within work-related assignments.

These learning forms can be illustrated as shown in the following figure. The designation in-house learning comprises the three last-mentioned activities above that enjoy the common feature of being workplace-based.

Figure 2.2: Adult education 'learning forms'



In the last few years, institutions working with adult education and training in Denmark have become more and more aware of the importance of taking all the learning possibilities and potentials into account. Instead of only concentrating upon their own 'delivery' *e.g.* a training course, they now put a lot of effort into understanding the context where the newly acquired knowledge will be used. This also means there is focus on the distribution of responsibility between the enterprise, the training provider, and the individual. More and more training providers see it as part of their responsibility to assist enterprises in consciously taking advantage of all the learning.

With a view to obtaining closer ties between in-house learning and institutionalised education, it has been necessary to gain more insight as to what people learn on and in the job. A number of specific learning forms have been identified within various industries. Several of these forms are recognised from other contexts, for example the practice and theory issues relating to how employee courses are organised. Both universities and institutions as for instance Danish Technological Institute have carried out a lot of research and field studies concerning this theme [*Teknologisk Institut, Arbejdsliv* (Danish Technological Institute, Human Resources Development), Workplace learning, In-house education and learning in theory and practice (1997); *Teknologisk Institut, Arbejdsliv, Kompetenceløft i Danmark* (Competence lift in Denmark) (1998); *Teknologisk Institut, Arbejdsliv, Kompetenceløft i Danmark – Sammenfatning* (Summary) (1998)].

The AMU system's project 'The Integrated Delivery of CVT' has carried out several experiments in order to find new ways of enhancing the co-operation with enterprises and their in-house training strategies. There are many examples of how AMU providers have supported enterprises in their processes of organisational development. Among

other ways, this has been done by combining traditional AMU training with direct support to enterprises in systematising their in-house training.

To provide a very short overview of some of the learning forms very typical in Danish enterprises the following list summons up:

- Internal meetings.
- Discussion groups.
- Working groups, teams.
- Project work.
- Help from superiors.
- Help from peers/colleagues.
- Discussion of working routines.
- Studying manuals.
- 'Learning by oneself'.
- Learning by colleague.

It is self-evident that all the above-mentioned learning forms contain an element of self-learning, 'learning by doing'. People learn on their own, achieve routine, and discover new tricks of the trade by conducting the work themselves.

The existence of typical learning forms within a specific job does not necessarily disclose how an employee in the specific job is accustomed to learning. Working experience from previous jobs may vary considerably.

Systematic assessments of actual training in the job situation are scarce, and because it is difficult to quantify training assessments, existing surveys should not be consulted without reservations. However, statistic information should be mentioned, *e.g.* it is interesting that one third of the enterprises conducting supplementary courses apply training in the job situation.

About seventeen per cent of the labour force participate in training in the job situation. Smaller companies employing fewer than 100 persons tend to apply training in the job situation more often than larger companies, and the training is especially applied in connection with new employment, prevalent in approximately 70 per cent of the companies.

In accordance with the definitions above, it is estimated that 2 per cent of working hours are utilised for training in the job situation; a little less, however, in smaller companies. Newly employed staff on average utilise 13 per cent of working hours for training in the job situation.

2.6 Economic and social return from adult learning

The long-term intention with the publicly financed adult education is to increase future prosperity by improving the qualification level of the labour force, and accordingly to achieve improved productivity and competition. Adult education is an investment that is

expected to produce a number of positive economic and job-related effects. Furthermore, education is also a good experience in itself for many of the adult students. For a good deal of the adult students the primary aim is not to qualify themselves to enter the labour market, but, to a higher degree, to develop personally. Moreover, the government has put great emphasis on education and training of adults as part of the democratic development of society.

It is the aim that publicly subsidised adult education and training should:

- Contribute to enhancing labour force qualifications, and accordingly increase productivity and the economic growth potential.
- Contribute to reducing structural unemployment by improving adjustment between supply and demand (on the labour market), and accordingly minimise the risk for bottlenecks.
- Contribute to maintaining attachment to the labour market particularly for non-graduates, thereby contributing to increasing the labour force in the long run and preventing ostracism from the labour market.

Denmark has not calculated the economic effects of adult education, due to methodical difficulties. Various forms of evaluations and measurements of the training schemes have continuously been conducted without any coherence. The reasoning is that different preconditions prompt individual participants, enterprises, or society to approach adult education, implying different bases for surveys. It is, accordingly, difficult to assess the economic effects collectively.

Surveys seldom consider how participants in the sampled education programmes would have managed - for instance on the labour market - had they not completed the course in question. Furthermore, an excess of surveys alone focus on the efforts targeting unemployed instead of the economic effects of training employed. The presented economic effects from the following surveys all have some form of methodical limitation or shortcoming, implying that generalisation of the results must be conducted with care.

Economic return of participation

Various surveys indicate direct or indirect economic effects of adult education related to the labour market (vocational education and training, and AMU courses) – *Arbejdsministeriet* (Ministry of Labour), *Undervisningsministeriet* (Ministry of Education), *Finansministeriet* (Ministry of Finance) (1999), *Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen* (National Labour Market Authority) (2000):

- AMU courses and training at Vocational Educational Training Institutions increase participants' job opportunities (upon completion of course). This effect is most pronounced for courses of long duration.
- AMU courses' effect on employees' risk of unemployment is very uncertain, but tends to be modest. AMU courses presumably have a positive, but modest effect on employees' wages.
- AMU courses increase participants' mobility on the labour market, particularly the first one-two years after completing the course. This primarily applies to the so-called industrial mobility and least for vocational mobility. The mobility of training groups is very similar.

- Participation in training programmes at day folk high schools reduces unemployment of activated unemployed, but this effect is somewhat inferior to that of training programmes at AMU centres and Vocational Educational Training Colleges (Technical Colleges). As to hard-core unemployed the effect seems rather negative. This may, however, be influenced by day folk high schools being applied as preparatory courses for additional activation.

The above cannot 'automatically' be equated to positive economic return, which can only be obtained if the positive results exceed the cost of the implemented courses, a factor not included in the surveys.

Apart form these more specific attempts to calculate economic effects of adult education and training, it is, however, possible to establish facts of adult education's economic effects at societal level and effects of only partial economic character. It is very difficult to quantify such statements with a fair degree of precision. Some of these effects are in fact not of an economic character at all, and are only indirectly related to the economy.

Several societal effects of adult learning have direct or indirect economic impact, but it should be noted that these effects probably also are prevalent in many other societies applying adult learning, and should not be acknowledged as a typically Danish phenomena.

Other surveys of qualification return

A number of detailed surveys have been completed on the effects of qualification development obtained by course participants [*Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen* (National Labour Market Authority), *Kvalitet og effekt af arbejdsmarkedsuddannelserne* (1999); *Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen*, *Effekten af aktivering I aktivperioden* (1999); *PLS Consult* (1998); *Socialforskningsinstituttet* (the Danish National Institute of Social Research (1997)]. Results are particularly available on the AMU training's effects at enterprise and participant level.

Surveys indicate that:

- AMU education programmes play a significant role in product and service quality in connection with enterprises' introduction of new technology.
- Employees' flexibility and adaptability seem to be increasing by participation in adult vocational training programmes.
- Both skilled and unskilled obtain positive returns from participation in an AMU course. AMU courses improve early school leavers' employment opportunities, while the vocationally trained obtain the most considerable return including job opportunities, motivation for further education and mobility in terms of changes in the job situation after completion of the training programme.

An enterprise-oriented survey, OECD (1998), indicates that:

- Adult training increases productivity in the enterprise. It is, however, difficult to calculate the exact extent.
- Adult learning in enterprises provides the strongest effect when changes are implemented simultaneously in internal structures, working processes, and possibly technological innovation.

Social and other forms of return on participation
The adult education and training surveys also indicate other effects at participant and enterprise level. Effects with both economic and non-economic aspects:

- The individual participant may obtain benefits for instance in terms of lesser risk of being sidelined on the labour market.
- Adult learning participation increases the individual's chances for a well-paid, interesting, and developing work.
- Enterprises may benefit from the employee's adult learning participation by obtaining efficient and flexible manpower.
- Adult training programmes help to strengthen personal development in relation to family or societal issues and other social relations.

Research focussing on students' own evaluations of the results obtained by participating in adult learning show that participants often develop a lot personally by participating in adult education and training [*Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen* (the National Labour Market Authority), *Survey af effekten af aktiveringsindsatsen i dagpengeperioden* (1999)]. Quite a large number of adult students express that it can be transcending to begin an education or a training programme as an adult. At the same time, many adults, who participate in education programmes of a long duration, say that they feel that they have started a whole new life, and that they regard this as a very positive element in their lives.

Measuring the effect of adult education and learning
When preparing the Adult Education Reform a number of targets were identified for future effect measurement of public adult education. In 2001, work will start on the implementation in order to ensure that analyses and measurements of the effects of the adult learning activities can be carried out at all levels.

Focus will not only be on quantitative targets and to what extent they are being met (the societal angle) but also on more qualitative effects of the adult education and training programmes, as seen from the individuals' point of view.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour will lay down a framework for such measurements. The results of the measurements of the adult education and training effort are meant to be included in the initiative which is to start in 2001 on drawing up a statement of 'national competence accounts'.

Quality assurance

The Ministry of Education
Quality may be assured and developed at several levels:

- At the level of the overall adult education and training system.
- At the education or education programme level.
- At the institutional level.

At system level the instruments are, typically, information about the system, together with systematic evaluations/assessments of the overall adult education and training system.

Denmark's Evaluation Institute is an independent institution under the Ministry of Education. Its statutory tasks are: external examination of individual education programme under the Ministry of Education, assessment of coherence between various educational programmes, development and innovation as to evaluation techniques and methods, and collection of national and international experiences with education evaluation.

At the education programme level the traditional quality assurance tools of the Ministry of Education are executive orders on the education programmes (level, structure, aim, contents, central examination requirements, *etc.*), as well as teacher and management qualifications, laid down by the Ministry.

At the institutional level the instruments will be internal evaluation (self-assessment) and work with quality development at institutions and schools under the Ministry of Education. This work may be carried on within the framework of central regulations or by using a common set of quality assurance tools within a given education programme, involvement of expertise *i.a.* in connection with the assessment of applications for new education programmes or in connection with the development of new education programmes.

Supervision of institutions and their activities may include the option for the Ministry of Education to instruct the institution the carry out changes, if necessary to discontinue an education programme or to take away the approval of the institution's providing the education programme in the case of serious quality failure. The method of performance varies from one education area to the next.

The Ministry of Labour
The quality of the adult vocational training courses are first of all secured through approved training plans and through the approval of the providers of the training courses. In a number of AMU courses there are final examinations according to central regulations, while at the majority of courses the AMU centres issue training certificates if, according to the teacher's assessment, after completion of the course the participant meets the defined goals of the training plan.

On 1 January 2000, a joint Internet system was implemented in the AMU system in order to evaluate all qualifying AMU programmes. The evaluations were implemented at all training institutions supplying adult vocational training, including AMU centres,

business schools, and other suppliers. All suppliers must moreover ensure that all their training programmes are evaluated by enterprises at least once before the end of the year.

The joint evaluation system has been developed in a co-operation between the social partners, comprising the adult education councils, training institutions, and the National Labour Market Authority.

The purpose of the evaluation system is to provide a systematic and well-founded base for prioritising the effort in terms of quality improvements and quality documentation at both the central level and with the training suppliers. The system provides documentation of the quality in the courses, as well as a base for on-going quality development of the training effort. In the AMU field, the implemented quality control initiative has implied a giant step in the direction of realising the recommendations of the Adult Education Reform report.

Changes in legislation and regulation in the AMU field increase training suppliers' degree of freedom in the planning of training programmes. The more flexible regulations pose increased demands to the quality control of the training effort. The evaluation and effect measurement system will in this connection constitute a principal tool in future development and documentation of training quality.

A co-operation has furthermore been established between the Ministry of Labour and the Danish Evaluation Institute enabling the AMU system to be included in transverse evaluations in the adult training field.

3. Issues, problems, and good practices

3.1 Motivation of adult learners

Many adults have a very ambivalent attitude to education and training. They have a functional attitude to education and training; even if they do want to learn something that is immediately useful, they do not wish to participate in activities that can seriously change their self-understanding as adults or their everyday life. For some adults, it also has to do with bad memories from their school years, making them feel insecure at the prospect of returning to school.

But there is also a large group of participants in adult education and training who know the adult education and training system and are pleased with the possibilities supplied by the adult education and training system.

Several Danish studies on adult participation in education and training show that the higher educational level adults have, the more formal supplementary education and training do they participate in - not just formal supplementary education and training, but also in-house training in enterprises [*Socialforskningsinstituttet* (the Danish National Institute of Social Research) (2000); *Handelshøjskolen i København* (Copenhagen Business School) *and Dansk Management Forum* (1997); *Institut for Konjunktur-Analyse* (Institute for Economic Trends Analysis) (1999)].

A survey of participants in various types of adult education and training shows that the participants indicate that they themselves were the principal initiators of the training activity in 67 per cent of the cases, while in 22 per cent of the cases the participants indicate that the enterprises were the initiators [*Socialforskningsinstituttet* (the Danish National Institute of Social Research) (1999)]. However, there are differences between the education programmes. Persons who have attended VUC centres and higher education institutions feel, to a higher degree than the average participant, that they have initiated the activity, while persons attending adult vocational training programmes indicate, to a much higher degree than the average, that the enterprise took the initiative. The survey also shows that 69 per cent indicate that it was their own decision entirely, while 22 per cent indicate that it was partially their decision. Thus, more than 90 per cent of the participants indicate that they at least were a party to the decision.

The project on adult didactics (*Voksendidaktikprojektet*) at Roskilde University has made qualitative studies of adult people's motivation for participating in adult learning (participants at day folk high schools, VUC centres and AMU centres) [Ahrenkiel *et al.* (1998); Ahrenkiel, Illeris, Nielsen and Simonsen (1999); Illeris, Simonsen, Ahrenkiel (1998)]. The study describes the typical motivations and attitudes to adult education and training of the groups of men and women with a low level of education and training. The study points out, *inter alia*, that there are not only significant gender differences among the more mature adults in relation to participation in adult learning, but that this gender 'segregation' reaches into the schools themselves: composition of teaching staff, school culture including pedagogical approach and social conventions.

It is a general finding in this study that the broad, popular adult education and training programmes impinge on adult participants' laboriously established identity as adults - and that there is no clear understanding of this at neither the political, the administrative nor the pedagogical level. The report from Roskilde University also identifies a number of issues which deserve being looked further into, *i.e.* the 'feminine' and the 'masculine' school settings respectively. Does the obligation of the school culture to the specific target groups in reality impede the participants' possibilities of getting on in their working lives and in relation to their personal development, rather than help them? And is it a drawback for the schools when trying to appeal to the 'opposite' sex?

In the report *'Danskernes læse-regne-færdigheder - i et internationalt lys'*, AKF, 2000 (Literacy and numeracy skills of the Danes - seen in an international light) on the result of Denmark's participation in SIALS, a surprising finding is highlighted. Danes, in comparison with the populations of other countries, acknowledge only to a very limited extent the fact that they allegedly have literacy or numeracy problems. Naturally, many Danes - more often those with insufficient skills - find that they do not live up to demands in daily life, not least at work. But a far smaller proportion of the Danes have this understanding, compared with the populations of other countries with skills at the same level. The report concludes that there is a need for creating better insight into people's own skills in order to facilitate a lift especially in reading skills among a considerable segment of the population.

3.2 Identification of adults' needs

Keywords like 'flexibility' and 'adaptability' signal the needs as seen from society's perspective. This need is formulated in the adult education and continuing vocational training policy with a reference to the demands of a modern market and knowledge society, and written into the Adult Vocational Reform.

But the demands of society and enterprises are not necessarily consistent with the traditional concept among the majority of the adult population that education and training is a thing of childhood and youth, developing and qualifying the young person for a certain profession and a certain place in society. Later in life, adults may feel the need for a follow-up if *e.g.* business conditions change, and further education and training may be needed for the pursuit of career goals. But the traditional concept of adult identity, and of meeting educational needs as either a youth phenomenon or as a steadily advancing process in life, has now been overtaken by society's more radical demands for change and orientation towards new goals.

The youngest participants in adult learning (*i.e.* still in their early 20s) as described in the *Voksendidaktikprojekt* study do not share the same traditional concept of their life conditions that is common to most of the more mature adults. Their adaptability, which by the education and training system may be perceived as lack of purpose, may also be seen as a new form of purpose, which is aimed at training the very ability to cope with unceasing mental processes of change, which is being missed with the only slightly older adults. However, as pointed out in the report from Roskilde University, it is another question whether the adult education and continuing vocational training programmes are adequately equipped to receive these 'new' adults.

Like in other countries, there is an acute awareness in Denmark that continuous and unpredictable change in the employment system has radically changed employment patterns among the working population. There is an increasing realisation that stable life-long jobs are a phenomenon of the past and that people will have to adapt and/or change their occupations more often within their professional life. This development has triggered off a debate on the nature of initial or youth education and has led to the understanding that the latter can only be foundation learning. The importance of adult further training and retraining has received new attention, not only in its traditional meaning of second chance education, but rather as an inherent characteristic of normal professional careers.

Good practices: Distance Learning and eLearning

Focus on distance learning as a supplementary teaching and learning form was renewed in 1998 when a need arose for competence development in connection with reorganisation into decentralised, more flexible ICT systems in many companies. This led to the development of new courses/education programmes. Distance learning has become an important activity in several education programmes and subject areas especially within open education programmes.

The new concept of e-Learning comprises a wide range of learning processes being put at disposal in electronic format, the use of which can be organised to meet an individual learning strategy with flexible possibilities of acquiring knowledge in other, untraditional ways, and the possibility of meeting learning needs among quite new target groups, among them people with reading and writing problems. Learning settings can be moved to the participants' own settings, thus enabling a competence development that may be adapted to meet the conditions of both the individual and the enterprise, which is of importance especially to the possibilities of CVT in small enterprises.

Thus, distance learning and e learning strike more flexible roads to the organisation of education and training, far from the standard packages, which used to characterise the education and training system. More flexible offers of education and training are an important element in the adult education reform.

ICT in adult vocational training: action plan and ICT pioneer projects

In 1999, an ICT action plan was implemented for the adult vocational training programmes, aiming at the planning of systematic involvement of new technology in the contents of and organisation of adult vocational training. In order to keep pace with the technological development in the workplace, adults with a low level of education and training are to be offered the possibility of ICT training and acquiring skills in operating ICT tools as well as ICT based methods in information search, communication, and daily work functions. ICT skills are also a prerequisite for participating in CVT in the future. Several ICT pioneer projects based on interplay between traditional and flexible organisation forms as well as interplay between teaching at schools and training in the enterprises have been initiated.

Denmark's Virtual University

Denmark's Virtual University, a joint venture of the Minister of Education and the Minister of IT and Research as one of the initiatives mentioned in the IT policy statement to Parliament in January 2000, is a co-operation between Danish further and

higher education institutions supplying qualifying further and higher education and supplementary education and training via flexible internet based distance learning. The target groups are fulltime students and the working population who demand continuing education and training at a high level, as well as public and private enterprises - and further and higher education institutions who wish to supply and use the tools that Denmark's Virtual University place at their disposal for the development of flexible net-based distance learning.

The Government has set aside DKK 40 million for the establishment of Denmark's Virtual University. The means will be used for the establishment of an common internet portal to courses offered on the internet – and for the launching of 6-8 major development projects till the end of 2003, where *e.g.* several further and higher educational institutions join in partnerships on developing and organising innovative and forward-looking courses on the internet.

3.3 The enterprises' use of continuing education

In 1998, in connection with the preparatory work for the Adult Education Reform, a survey of enterprises' use of and evaluation of adult learning was carried out among 905 public and private enterprises [*Socialforskningsinstituttet* (the Danish National Institute of Social Research) (1999)].

The survey revealed that 91 per cent of the public enterprises and 56 per cent of the private enterprises, within a period of two years, had employees participating in public adult education and training.

The two decisive factors as to whether enterprises demand adult learning are the size of the enterprise and its employee structure. The extent of adult learning is proportional to the size of the enterprise, and the demand for adult learning is proportionally bigger the higher the average educational level of the enterprise is.

Other surveys also show that the larger the size of the enterprise, the greater the adult learning activity [Statistics Denmark (1998 and 1999)]. Amongst the largest enterprises with at least 500 employees there is a 100 per cent rate of uptake. If, however, Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) is measured by uptake per employee, the marked differences between small and large enterprises disappear; except within the finance and insurance sector, which has a considerably higher figure than other sectors, also according to course participation per employee.

At the same time, the survey also shows that the extent of employees' CVT activities depends as much on the actual economic sector as on the size of the enterprise.

Firms in the construction and building sector, which is heavily dominated by smaller craft based businesses, make the least use of CVT - approximately 70 per cent - which is incidentally at the same level as other manufacturing industries.

The reverse is the case in finance and insurance, in which nearly all enterprises have embarked on CVT. In this field there are many very large enterprises with their own

training departments. Generally, the basic educational level of the employees is also somewhat higher within this sector.

Within businesses the main obstacle to participation in adult learning is pressure of work, and the problem of sparing employees presents considerable barriers, particularly in the private sector and in small enterprises. This indicates that the use of rotation systems, improved planning of the training activities in businesses, together with increased collaboration between small enterprises, including establishing of training partnerships in networks, could increase the volume of CVT.

There is a very high employment turnover rate at the Danish labour market. Only 38 per cent of the persons who were employed in 1993 were employed at the same workplace in 1997. 16 per cent had had a new job within the same sector, while 23 per cent had changed to another sector. 23 per cent had left the labour market or were unemployed at the time of the investigation.

At the same time, we have seen great changes in the job functions that are covered by the employed. Approximately 17 per cent of the employed that remained at the same workplace changed job function category. The majority of those changed to a better job with a greater responsibility, whereas approximately 7 per cent changed to less demanding job function than the ones they had in 1993.

In a labour market where the employment turnover rate is high, and where the firms tend to use the hire and fire strategy when they need new qualifications, a well-functioning adult education and training system plays a pivotal role in helping firms to secure qualified labour when they need it. By the same token, education and training providing the individual with qualifications that are recognised at the labour market and that have a variety of applications ensure that the individual has the best possible prerequisites for holding on to employment. And to an increasing extent, good learning possibilities are becoming a competition parameter for the enterprises – in line with the enterprises experiencing shortage of labour.

In the user survey from 1998, enterprises were asked to state their use of educational planning. 55 per cent of the public enterprises and about 40 per cent of the private enterprises use education plans for their employees. However, there is a considerable difference between large and small enterprises as regards the use of educational planning. While more than 2/3 of the large enterprises - private as well as public ones - undertake such a planning, less than 1/3 of the small private enterprises and less than 40 per cent of the small public enterprises do so, cf. Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Which employees do the enterprises plan for?

	Share of enterprises with education plans for the employees, pct.							
	Private enterprises				Public enterprises			
	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Unskilled/semi-skilled workers	15	36	66	22	45	35	48	41
Skilled workers	31	43	65	35	41	41	81	45
Salaried workers with up to 3 years of education	27	55	83	37	42	62	78	52
Salaried workers with up to 4 years of education	35	55	76	44	28	56	74	44

Note: The figures are given as per cent of the number of enterprises. Definitions: Small enterprise = 1-19 employees; medium enterprise = 20-99; large enterprise = 100+ employees.

Source: *Arbejdsministeriet, Undervisningsministeriet, Finansministeriet: Mål og midler i offentligt finansieret voksen- og efteruddannelse,* 1999.

Thus, educational plans are most frequently prepared for the salaried worker group, cf. Table 3.1. This is especially true for the private enterprises. For skilled workers in small private enterprises and in large public enterprises, the enterprises have to a higher degree established education plans than they have for unskilled/semi-skilled workers. The difference is most pronounced in private enterprises, cf. Table 3.1.

In recent years, a number of initiatives have been taken with a view to boost the enterprises' demand for education; both in the form of special financial support of educational planning and in the form of intensified co-operation between educational institutions and enterprises.

An example of the latter is the project 'The Integrated Delivery of CVT' carried through within the AMU system in 1997 - 2000. The key issues of the project include: tailoring courses more closely to participants' needs and qualifications; the relationship between the training courses and the enterprises' own human resource development activities; and the match between learning and changing requirements in the labour market. The Integrated Delivery is emphasising coherence of the training process from the very first stages of contact with participants and enterprises to the final stage - where the employees are back in their workplaces and make use of their new qualifications.

When CVT is to be linked more closely to the participants' present or future working life, the dialogue with enterprises and other customers becomes even more important than before. It provides an opportunity for customers to assume a larger joint responsibility for the identification of course participants' needs and for the benefits of the training. This increases the importance of understanding more about the participants' expectations, job functions, and motivation in order to plan and implement an effective learning process.

Experiences show that the output of the training is better if the interplay with the users and the customers is managed more systematically - both before and after the training. Close interplay can be organised through the three connected phases that make up a coherent process:

- The preparation phase: a dialogue with users and customers about the aim and the expectations to the training; typically giving a sound basis for the planning of the single learning process.
- The training phase: the knowledge about the participants' skills and demands ensures a better connection between the training and the demands in the workplace and/or the labour market. The participants' current work experience may be drawn into the training.
- The follow-up phase: follow-up on how the participants and the enterprises have benefited from the training. The feedback may be used to further improve the CVT provision and to strengthen the organisational framework of the learning.

3.4 The role of the social partners

Perspective of the social partner co-operation

To understand the Danish model for VET and CVT, it is necessary to understand the Danish tripartite model. Often, it is referred to as part of the Danish (or Nordic) culture. And in fact it is, in the sense that it concerns positions built up over a long time and gradually rooted within the organisations of the key players as well as within its members and member organisations.

Practice has proved that no matter whether the government might shift among the political parties, the consensus of the labour market partners on all major issues has been a guarantee that the overall Danish labour market policy will not waver. In this sense, the roots of the Danish model should be found in the degree of consensus at the many levels of co-operation in Denmark, and not specifically in the central institutional set-up for partner co-operation.

The governance of the Danish adult education and continuing vocational training takes place, to a very high degree, in a co-operation between the government (Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education) and the social partners by means of a large number of councils and committees with various competencies. Typically, the partners are strongly involved in the governance within the field of the Ministry of Labour, while the main emphasis on adult and continuing education and training within the field of the Ministry of Education, when seen in the overall view, lies on counselling.

Centrally, the social partners are represented in the many councils and committees, which give advice to the Ministers of Labour and Education as regards both basic vocational education and training and CVT. The counselling is aiming at contents, administration of supply, financing, quality measuring, *etc.* (Concerning the council structure within the adult and continuing education field, see Appendix 1.)

Regionally, the social partners are represented in the regional labour market councils, which supervise the development and demand for qualifications of the regional labour market, and prepare the regional efforts to develop the qualifications of the unemployed.

Locally, the social partners are represented in the boards of the publicly financed educational institutions, and thereby they have a direct joint responsibility for the development in the individual institution including quality development of the institution's education programmes.

The partners' involvement in the public adult and continuing educational policy in Denmark is generally tied to the idea that the partners can convey four favourable conditions to the policy:

- The conveyance of know-how which can contribute to qualifying the policy.
- The conveyance of legitimate employee and employer interests to the decision-making process which can contribute to the consensus between the partners and thereby more durable solutions.
- Contribution to ensure the support of the political decisions which contributes to a smooth implementation of the decisions in schools and enterprises.
- Contribution to ensure a broad, democratic debate about adult and continuing education.

The role of the partners in relation to the Danish adult education and training system can be summarised in the following points:

- As regards the vocational levels of education and training (both basic and adult) the partners have a direct joint responsibility for identifying educational requirements and the development of relevant education and training programmes. Hereby, the social partners also take on a joint responsibility that the labour market requires the qualifications which the participants obtain through the education and training, and that these qualifications are broadly recognised in the labour market.
- Through the counselling as regards contents, supply, quality *etc.* of both vocational and non-vocational adult and continuing education, the labour market in general takes on a joint responsibility for the prioritisation of the qualification development in the Danish society including also a commitment to support the use of adult and continuing education via their respective organisations.

In connection with the adult education reform, as mentioned above, the social partners get a larger responsibility than before for the financing and prioritisation of the vocational adult and continuing education up to VET level. The new Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training (AUF) set out on its task in October 2000, so experience is very limited as yet. Among the key problems that the social partners on the AUF board have had to decide on up to now has been the laying down of new economic conditions for AMU and the setting up of 15 new Continuing Vocational Training Committees, which are replacing 50 committees. The social partners have agreed on the solutions. But there is a significant challenge ahead for the partners to develop the co-operation with a view to obtaining consensus on the education needs and the financing of the education and training programmes, also when this means a need for the organisations or the members to contribute to the financing

through collective contributions from the organisations via the agreements or user payment.

Decentralised trade negotiations on funding arrangements

The economic commitment of the social partners for co-funding of the vocational training is an important indication of the priority given by these partners to the adult education and training. To such an extent it is a test case for the real priority setting of employers and employees.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the collective labour market negotiations have increasingly taken the form of decentralised negotiations, and 'soft issues' such as vocational training have got a still more important position in the negotiations. One of the issues has been the commitment for funding for VET activities, for the labour market as a whole and for the specific trades.

The decentralisation of the collective negotiations has put the trades in a key position, and a wide range of very specific agreements and commitments for support to the vocational training has been the outcome of this process. But the commitments are quite different from one trade to another. So, today it is not possible to give a full picture of the many decentralised commitments and agreements on training.

The access to CVT, however, has never been a top priority in the collective bargaining process in Denmark; the social partners have instead made use of their historically strong, institutionalised role where they have been able to use the money allocated by the state to CVT measures.

However, within a number of sectors agreements have been made by means of the collective agreements within a number of fields as regards the right to one to two weeks leave for continuing education per year. Also, educational funds have been established to which employers typically pay a contribution per work hour; the purpose of the funds is to promote innovation and development of education. Educational funds exist both in the private and the public labour market.

One system or mechanism for identification, assessment and recognition of qualifications is *qualifications based salary system,* put together by the social partners within industry. The specific salary system is based on jointly agreed criteria for deciding the salary level of the individual worker. The criteria are defined by the joint committees of the enterprise, but will normally include vocational training background, knowledge and skills related to the job function, responsibility and flexibility. It is not possible, because of the very decentralised bargaining system, to give a comprehensive overview of the use of such systems.

4. Summary and conclusions

4.1 Danish background

Denmark has a long tradition for adult learning. The roots go back to the 19th century, based on the ideas and thinking of Grundtvig and Kold - known as the folk high school movement. The original target groups were farmers; later the workers' movement established folk high schools in order to educate shop stewards and activists. Although the urbanisation caused the popular and cultural foundation of the early popular education to gradually crumble the issue, adult education kept high priority on the agenda. The 1942 legislation was very liberal, lacking any regulation in contents or training method. In the post war years, this implied intense state support available to almost any kind of adult education.

From the late 1950s, an independent, vocationally oriented, adult education and training system developed. Adult Vocational Training (AMU) - until 1985 known as Semi Skilled Worker training - was built up from the 1960s as a principal element of the vocational training system in Denmark.

During the last decades, various attempts have been made to link adult vocational training systems with adult liberal education. In 1984, the Danish parliament passed a resolution with the purpose of making an extra effort for those adults who had only received a small share of society's extensive education and training supply. Five years later, two new acts were passed, on general adult education and training and on education support for adults (VUS). In 1992, other support and lead schemes were introduced, giving adults of 25 years and more a possibility of becoming skilled through a specially planned education.

Since then, the development of the adult education and training system has been characterised by recurrent reforms changing the focus, roles and subsidy schemes, and setting new rules for the system. This all leaves the picture of a highly complex system, which in some cases, for the beneficiaries of the systems, might cause confusion and difficulties in finding the way through the many options. Speaking very generally, there has been a broad political consensus on investment in human resources development for a lifelong learning, with aims ranging from narrowly focussed labour market economic rationale to broader personal and life development aims.

This comprehensive history has formed the basis for an adult education culture in Denmark, which may be summarised under the following six headings:

Broad objectives and participation behind the adult learning system
A high educational frequency is believed to contribute to the productivity of the workforce, to low structural unemployment, and to a relatively equal distribution of income. The democratic process and options for personal development of the individuals are believed to be strengthened through equal access to basic education, as well as to additional and further education.

The system has developed through years and has been focused on three key areas:

- General adult education (having a general society educational focus).
- Vocational adult education and training (having a labour market focus).
- Adult liberal education (having an individual-centred, leisure-oriented focus).

Target groups
Participants in the Danish adult education and training system are different among themselves in terms of a number of criteria. Employed and unemployed adults participate in adult learning for different reasons - sometimes more, sometimes less voluntarily (*e.g.* participation initiated by their employer or public authorities), and they participate for different lengths of time ranging from a few days to several years.

There are employees wanting to acquire new, or improve, qualifications on the labour market, prompted by the employer or the employees themselves, and there are unemployed hoping to achieve employment on the basis of a vocationally qualifying course.

Other adults want to upgrade their education to be able to participate in the basic education system. Some of these adults do it because they are motivated and interested in more education, while for others a new education is necessary, since they cannot continue in their former jobs for example due to work-related injuries.

Refugees and immigrants with language problems participate in language courses enabling them to enter the labour market. Finally, there is a broad group of participants who participate in Adult Liberal Education where the learning combines personal interests and hobbies with issues also relevant for the working life.

In short, one third of all participants in adult learning had the shortest possible school education; about 40% had vocational education, and about one forth of all participants had some kind of further education higher than basic vocational training.

Financing
The funding for the continued vocational training is predominantly raised through substantial public funding and remuneration for the adult education and training activities and, as it appears, to a much greater extent than in other countries. User payment has been introduced in a number of schemes. But only in a couple of schemes did user payment amount to a considerable size and in 1998 it was abandoned in the AMU system.

On top of that comes quite important private investment - which may amount to an equal size in comparison to public investment in vocationally oriented education and training.

In order to regulate expenses and enhance a demand driven approach, a taximeter system has been introduced for education and training institutions, linking the public support to a specific institution directly to the number of full-time equivalent students at the institution.

Training providers
Adult training is supplied by a number of institutions with various tasks and objectives, depending on target groups, roles and duration of the training. The present situation reveals a quite complex system of training suppliers, with a relatively high number of small colleges/centres. On one hand, this offers a highly diversified range of entrances to the system, and on the other hand it leads to a fairly complex set-up, difficult to overview. Various training is also offered by a number of private providers, for instance consultancy firms, supplying various training for adults. The most usual private adult training includes computer courses, but also management training and personal development are very common.

Different players
An extensive adult education and continuing vocational training system has been developed in Denmark, and a large number of education and training systems exist, aimed at various target groups and educational needs in the Danish society.

The Danish public adult education and continuing vocational training efforts are the outcome of a number of systems with different educational or labour market oriented targets. The training offers are supplied by different institutions, offering courses and training with different contents, goals and duration. Thus, the Danish system offers a wide range of options for the individuals and enterprises to choose among. Adult vocational training is under the Ministry of Labour while all other public education falls under the Ministry of Education. Apart from the publicly regulated courses, there also exist a number of private organisations involved in training of adults. To this should be added the training taking place internally in enterprises.

The overall responsibility for adult education in Denmark is shared by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour. Each ministry has various councils and bodies to establish the framework and influence the establishment of the adult training system including each type of education. When it comes to the vocational education and training systems, a long tradition based on tripartite co-operation exists in the sense that the social partners set the framework for the education and at the same time commit themselves fully to the support for an acceptance of the established educational system, even to the level of the specific trade educations.

4.2 Key issues of the Adult Education Reform

A major adult education reform was adopted by Parliament in May 2000, focusing on better coherence and efficiency of the education system. The key problems that the reform aims at solving are:

Balance between public and private financing
In Denmark, the public authorities have an overall responsibility for securing relevant adult learning possibilities for all. But there is a balance to be kept between public and private financing. The enterprises must take over their natural part of the financing responsibility. The more specialised, or connected with concrete job functions of the individual enterprise, the content of an adult education and training programmes is, the more this should be reflected in the enterprises' financing. And vice versa: the less

generally applicable to the labour market and to the ordinary education and training system the content of an adult education and training programme is, the more it should be reflected in the public responsibility for financing.

As a part of the adult education reform, the financing of AMU courses that are adapted to the individual enterprises' needs, or are very specialised, are changed so that they will from now on be fully financed by user (enterprise) payment.

The measures that are targeted at the persons with low educational attainment are given priority so that AMU courses that entitle to credit transfer into vocational education and training programmes, including GVU, are secured a so-called 'free intake' (*i.e.* the institutions can admit all the applicants that they can accommodate) and are financed in full by the public authorities, whereas AMU courses that do not entitle to credit transfer into VET programmes, operate under an 'activity ceiling' and may be subjected to a partial user payment. In 2001, however, the government will continue to finance those AMU courses in full.

Institutional co-operation
The institutions are encouraged to engage actively in establishing and securing a well-functioning school cooperation on better use of resources (premises, machines, teachers, guidance, *etc.*). However, this cooperation does not function adequately everywhere.

Work needs to be done to remove administrative and legal barriers to local wishes for legally binding cooperation, including proper mergers on voluntary basis, and the two ministries will work out a common groundwork for funding conditions in connection with cross-sectoral school mergers.

In order to remove barriers and difficulties for the local school cooperation, the adult education reform has introduced, as one of its elements, a harmonisation of the principles for taximeter governance of the running costs within vocationally oriented adult education and training under the Ministry of Education as well as the Ministry of Labour, in order that competition and cooperation may be carried out on more equal terms, and administrative barriers for the provision of different forms of education and training are reduced.

Better interplay between the educational systems
The improved possibilities of interplay and credit transfer between AMU courses and vocational education and training (including GVU) mean enhancing the possibilities of making optimal use of courses taken within one training system (AMU) within another system (VET including GVU). Thus it will be possible to use the individual's qualifications and working experience to 'piece together' an entire vocational education, without risk of prior qualifications failing to be recognised in different training systems from the one where the qualifications were first obtained.

In the new GVU programme, also qualifications obtained outside the public adult education and learning system will be able to obtain credit transfer through individual assessment, thereby securing a shorter duration of the individual education programme.

Better output /quality in the specific programmes
The governance of the education and training provision shall contribute to creating strong and vocationally sustainable learning environments, both locally and regionally, thereby creating the basis for high quality in the education and training programmes and a good utilisation of financial and other resources.

A better practice concerning approval of institutions has been initiated. This work will be carried on and further strengthened in a close cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education in the fields where in future there will be an improved interplay between the education systems. The goal is to avoid double capacity through teaching being spread over too many institutions and classes with too few participants. The improved approval practice will contribute to reduce the overlap between institutions and the cancellation of courses due to insufficient participation.

At the same time, the approval instrument will be given a more central role in the total quality assurance effort. The institutions must be able to prove that they possess the prerequisites for a high vocational and pedagogical level in their teaching.

In order to secure that the publicly financed adult education and learning provision contribute to the realisation of concrete political goals, targets for the efforts must be set. The targets will be used in the prioritisation of the public funds, and they must be set in such a way that the efforts may be evaluated and the effects measured.

Both the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education are working at the development of tools to measure and improve the quality of the individual education and training programmes. Furthermore, they will define more precise targets for the adult education and training initiatives and at the same time define how evaluation and quality assessment may be secured in all fields and at all levels.

The Government will invite institutions of social studies to develop methods and analyse to what extent the adult education and training systems meet the overall societal goals.

More formal competence
The adult education and training initiatives do not today contribute sufficiently to the goal that persons with a short educational attainment obtain formal vocational qualification (competence). Only about 30 per cent of the activity result in formal qualifications. Of those 30 per cent barely 2 per cent result in a formal vocational qualification, while 15 per cent give so-called recognised competence. This is not least a problem for those with low educational attainment, who did not get a formal vocational education and training when young. People with low educational attainment have a much bigger unemployment risk than persons with a vocational education. Moreover, surveys of the basic education system tend to show that formal competence is significant for the effect on employment, productivity, mobility, *etc.*

Public financing is now being targeted to a higher degree towards education and training, which can contribute to giving formal qualifications in the ordinary education and training system. Leave schemes giving remuneration for loss of earnings to non-qualifying educational activities (*folkeoplysning*) are discontinued.

The effort of giving priority to qualifying education and training is targeted especially at persons with low educational attaining. More must be upgraded to skilled workers, also to make up for reduced intake of young people on the labour market in the years to come. The means are better possibilities of piecing together AMU courses to a full, qualifying vocational and training programme, as a GVU programme.

At the same time, however, it shall still be possible for people with low educational attainment to be upgraded through continuing training, which gives recognised competence with a view to specialised job functions (AMU). It is thus a double aim of the reform to secure that the labour market needs for qualified labour are being met here and now in order to prevent bottlenecks and imbalances on the labour market, and at the same time to contribute to a general competence lift by securing improved possibilities for people to become skilled.

The change in financing of adult vocational education and training at VET level – giving the social partners, through their membership of the AUF board, a coresponsibility for prioritising resources to vocational education and training at this level, is meant as an added incentive to attract more participants into qualifying education and training.

The aim of the Adult Education Reform, which will be in full operation from 1 January 2001, is thus to continually enhance the competence level of the population as a response to the challenges of the emerging knowledge society. The reform package is a substantial step towards establishing the educational and institutional infrastructure, which may support the individual's updating and supplying his/her own competencies on a lifelong basis at the work place, during leisure time and in the formal education system. The challenge as seen by the Government is to create an overall framework for publicly provided adult education and training, which ensures educational provision of high quality and relevance for society, the companies and the individual. And public financing should, more strongly than today, favour the groups that did not receive a qualifying youth education. Clearer principles as to the distribution of responsibilities between state, company and the individual have now been defined.

Thus, the adult education reform has both a democratic aspect and an economic aspect, and the future assessment of whether the reform is becoming a success the reform will be measured both from a societal angle and from the individual's point of view.

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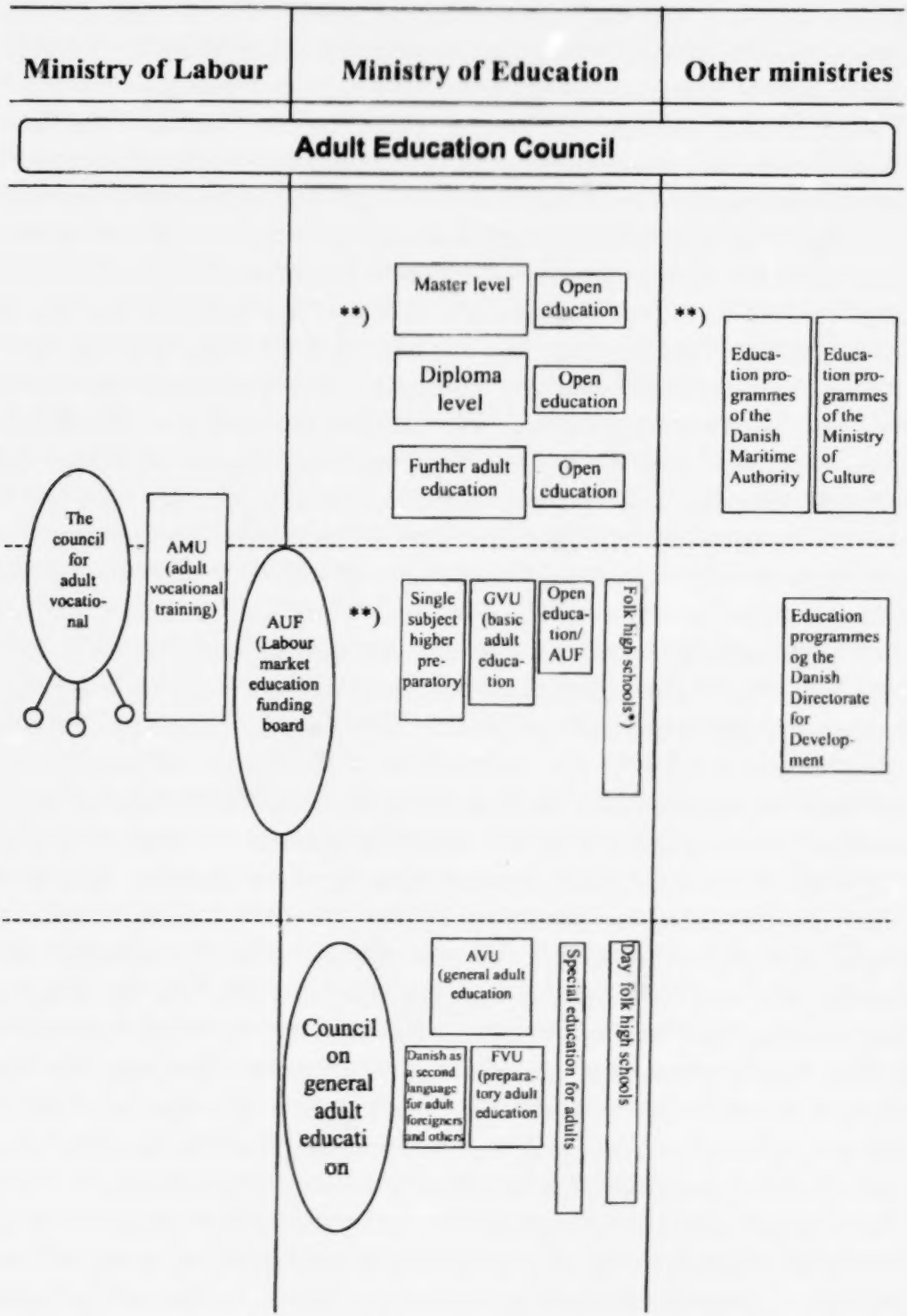
List of abbreviations

AE	Adult Education (*Voksenuddannelse*)
AF	Public Employment Service
AKF	Institute of Local Government Studies – Denmark (*Amternes og Kommunernes Forskningsinstitut)*
AMU	Adult Vocational Training (*Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelserne*)
AUF	Labour Market Institution for Financing of Education and Training (*Arbejdsmarkedets UddannelsesFinanciering*)
AVU	General Adult Education (*Almen VoksenUddannelse*)
CVT	Continuing Vocational training
ECTS	European Credit transfer System
FVU	Preparatory Adult Education (*Forberedende VoksenUddannelse*)
GSK	Supplementary Examination Courses at Upper Secondary Level, preparing for University study
GVU	Basic Adult Education (*Grunduddannelse for voksne*)
HF	Higher Preparatory Examination
HHX	Higher Commercial Examination
HTX	Higher Technical Examination
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
LO	The Danish Federation of Trade Unions (*Landsorganisationen i Danmark*)
RUE	The Council for Educational and Vocational Guidance (*Rådet for Uddannelse- og Erhvervsvejledning*)
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises (*Små og mellemstore virksomheder*)
SOSU	Social and Health Care (abbreviation used in connection with training or school)
SVU	State education support for adults (*Statens Voksen Uddannelsesstøtte*)
UR	Council for Adult Vocational Training (*Uddannelsesrådet*)
VET	Vocational Education and Training (*Erhvervsuddannelse*)
VEUD	Adult Vocational Education and Training (*Voksenerhvervsuddannelse*)
VEU-reform	Adult Education Reform (*Voksen- og Efteruddannelsesreform*)
VUC	General Adult Education Centre (*Voksenuddannelsescenter*)
VUS	Act on Education Support for Adults (*Voksenuddannelsesstøtte*)
VVU	Further Adult Education *(Videregående VoksenUddannelse)*

Appendix 1: Council on adult education (2000)



*) Estimated placing. The level of the teaching has not been determined.

**) Other councils. Give advice as to contents, levels, etc. concerning both basic levels of education and adult education and training. They are not included here to make the overview easier to understand.

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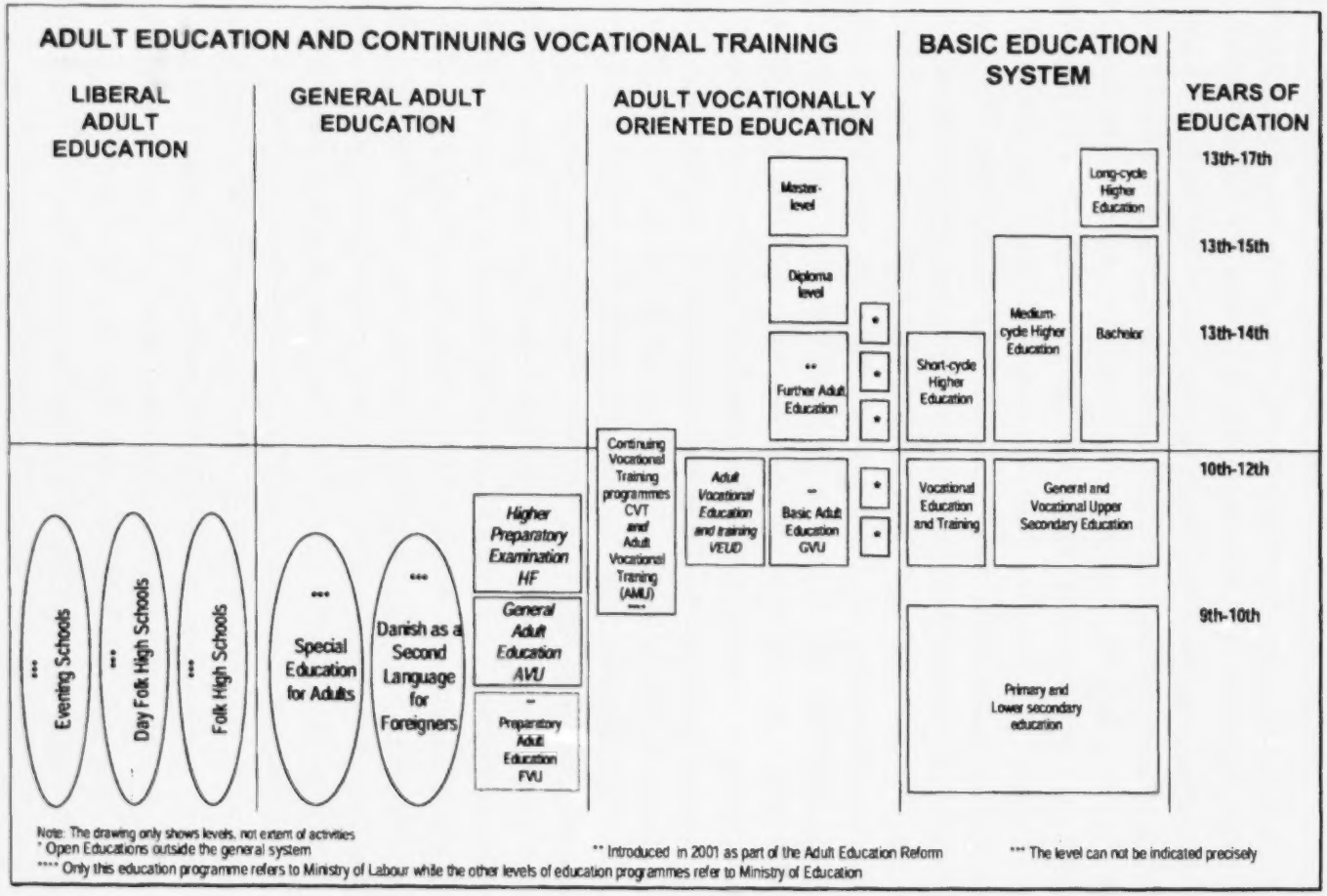
Appendix 2: The Danish Adult Education and Training System


ADULT EDUCATION AND CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING
LIBERAL ADULT EDUCATION
GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION
ADULT VOCATIONALLY ORIENTED EDUCATION
BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM
YEARS OF EDUCATION
13th-17th
13th-15th
13th-14th
10th-12th
9th-10th
Master-level
Diploma level
** Further Adult Education
Long-cycle Higher Education
Medium-cycle Higher Education
Bachelor
Short-cycle Higher Education
Continuing Vocational Training programmes CVT and Adult Vocational Training (AMU) ****
Adult Vocational Education and training VEUD
– Basic Adult Education GVU
Vocational Education and Training
General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education
Primary and Lower secondary education
*** Evening Schools
*** Day Folk High Schools
*** Folk High Schools
*** Special Education for Adults
*** Danish as a Second Language for Foreigners
Higher Preparatory Examination HF
General Adult Education AVU
– Preparatory Adult Education FVU
Note: The drawing only shows levels, not extent of activities
* Open Educations outside the general system
** Introduced in 2001 as part of the Adult Education Reform
*** The level can not be indicated precisely
**** Only this education programme refers to Ministry of Labour while the other levels of education programmes refer to Ministry of Education

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Appendix 3: Qualifying adult education and training

1. Courses in reading and mathematics.
   - Before 1 january 2001: reading courses
   - From 1 January 2001: FVU (Preparatory Adult Education) as a part of the adult education reform

   Education and training institutions: VUC (General Adult Education Centres) and other county financed schools such as SOSU (Social and Health Care) schools, and, according to agreement with the county council, AMU (Adult Vocational Training) centres, vocational colleges, day folk high schools, production schools, schools offering Danish as a second language, home economic schools and textile design schools, as well as popular educational associations.

2. Supplementary training for unskilled or skilled workers. Course(s) of short duration. The purpose is to provide the participants with new qualifications or maintain their qualifications.
   - AMU courses. Education and training institutions: AMU centres under the Ministry of Labour, approved vocational schools, agricultural schools under the Ministry of Education, and county financed SOSU schools.
   - Single subjects from ordinary vocational education and training programmes, agricultural education programmes, and SOSU education programmes provided under the act on Open Education. Education and training institutions: vocational schools, agricultural schools under the Ministry of Education, county SOSU schools.

3. Qualifying adult education and training at vocational upper secondary education level.
   - VEUD: Adult VET (Vocational Education and Training) apprenticeship with credit transfer of previously obtained competence. Education and training institutions: vocational schools under the Ministry of Education, approved AMU centres under the Ministry of Labour.
   - SOSU training programmes (basic training programmes for social and health service assistants, *etc.*): Open education programmes with credit transfer of previously obtained competence. Education and training institutions: SOSU schools.
   - From 1 January 2001: GVU (Basic Adult Education) as part of the adult education reform = the same competence as (V)EUD and agricultural education at vocationally oriented youth education level – but without apprenticeship contracts. SOSU education programmes are not included until the youth education programme has been revised (effect from 1 January 2002). Education and training institutions: approved vocational schools and agricultural schools under the Ministry of Education, approved AMU centres under the Ministry of Labour. Approved SOSU schools later.

4. General or academically-oriented adult education.
   - AVU (General Adult Education) at 9th – 10th grade level: gives the same access to further studies as the examinations of the Folkeskole (lower secondary school) at the corresponding level, but some of the subjects differ; content and pedagogical aim are different, since it is directed towards the adult population. Education and training institutions: county VUC (general adult education) centres.
   - HF (Higher Preparatory Examination), single subject higher preparatory examination, upper secondary school leaving examination single subject course, GSK (Supplementary Examination Courses at Upper Secondary Level, preparing for university study): the same competence as the general and vocational upper secondary education, the same subjects, and the same content/pedagogy. Only the planning is different (single subject teaching is more flexible, adapted to the needs of adults). Education institutions: county financed VUC (General Adult Education Centres), HF (Higher Preparatory Examination) courses (both types offer HF) and upper secondary schools (upper secondary school leaving examination); some HF courses or upper secondary schools in university towns (GSK).
   - HHX (Higher Commercial Examination), HTX (Higher Technical Examination): in principle the same comments as to single subject higher preparatory examination courses – however, we are here dealing with vocational upper secondary education. Education and training institutions: vocational schools under the Ministry of Education.

5. If a person has a higher level of education and wants supplementary training. The purpose is to give an opportunity of maintaining and developing obtained qualifications, or acquiring knowledge on and experience with new subject areas.
   - Modules or single subjects from existing higher levels of education provided under the act on Open Education. Or subject-specific courses. Modules and single subjects from existing education programmes are qualifying, while subject-specific courses are shorter than non-qualifying courses the content of which is based on elements from existing qualifying levels of education. Education and training institutions: the institutions providing the full vocational level of education.

6. If a person has a general or vocational upper secondary education or a higher level of education and wants an adult level of education at a higher educational level [VVU (Further Adult Education) level, Diploma level, or Master level].
   - Further adult education: The same level as short-cycle higher education courses, but of shorter duration, and admission terms include 2 years of relevant job experience. Content and planning include job experience, so there is a close connection between theory and practice. The level is new in the area of adult education (but is known from the basic educational level). The level is being developed. Educational institutions with higher educational levels including certain vocational schools.
   - Diploma and Master level: these levels have been known for several years. They correspond to medium-cycle and long-cycle higher education courses/BA and MA respectively. Now included in the overall philosophy. Institutions with higher educational levels.

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